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THE

REFORM MINISTRY,

AND THE

REFORMED PARLIAMENT.

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"I SHOULD wish to ask the Noble Lord, (said the Duke of Wellington to Earl Grey, in a speech on the Reform Bill,) how any Ministry will hereafter be able to conduct the King's Government, with a Parliament such as will be returned by this Bill."

Well,—the experiment has been tried. The first Session of the Reformed Parliament has closed. That Parliament, which, according to the prophecies of one side, was to bring with it little else than anarchy; which, according to the hopes of the other, was at once to relieve all our burthens, and redress every abuse.

Of course, the fears and the hopes of both sides were exaggerated. It must, nevertheless, be admitted that those who feared had more reasonable foundation for their alarm, than those who had hoped for their expectations. Any Parliament, reformed or unreformed, might have gone far to corrupt or destroy the institutions of the country; they might have brought about that anarchy which was prophesied or affected to be feared; but no Parliament could have done all that was pretended to be hoped. No Parliament would have done all this, even if we suppose the whole body to have had the clearest views as to what was expedient, and to have been unanimous in the pursuit of their objects.

That there is a nearer approach to wisdom and honesty in the present Parliament than in any of its predecessors, we think is shewn by the events of the Session; but still it is only an approach; and highly as we estimate the merits of the Reformed House, we still must admit, that if it gave peculiar advantages to a public spirited Ministry, it exposed such a Ministry, to peculiar difficulties.

Previous administrations have usually had but one set of opponents: opponents united in their principles, and all actuated by common motives. The battles they had to fight, and the questions they had to debate, were circumscribed within

limits, admitted by both sides.—It is the fortune of the present Government to be encountered by two hostile factions, the Tories and the Radicals, who appear to agree in no principle either of preservation or destruction, and have no object common to both, except that of endeavouring to persuade the people of the imbecility of the Ministers.

What has been done? is their cry.

It is obvious that the parties opposed to the Ministers would give different answers to this question. The Tories, if compelled to employ some definite terms, would probably assert that too much had been done; and the Radicals, too little.

But it must be remembered that the present Ministers are invested with the highest trust which it ever fell to the lot of men to execute. Their junction with either of the adverse parties must be fatal to the quiet of the country, and defeat, for a long period, all the good we have obtained, or may expect.

They must trust to the good sense of the great body of their fellow-citizens, to permit them gradually and steadily to repair the injuries which the country has sustained by a misgovernment of nearly fifty years, and claim a confidence for integrity for the future, by an impartial review of what has already passed.

The present Ministry wisely commenced the work of general reform by a reform in the constituency of the House of Commons. And surely, in effecting this great measure, no party can accuse them of want of integrity, or courage. They demolished by this blow the groundwork which had supported all preceding administrations. All that, for which former parties contended, and for which they sought to be in place.—With this reform, patronage, the main lever of former politicians, inevitably perished, and has left the present Ministers, as it will leave all future administrations, dependent solely on the support of the people. Their enemies did not then accuse them of doing nothing. The Tories announced the value of the measure by their terror, and the Radicals by their joy. As compared with the great measure of reform, all others appear subordinate. The impression it created, the excitement it produced, still agitates the public mind. Its magnitude conceals the importance of all other political measures. Every step which has followed it appears diminutive, when compared with this mighty stride. It renders men dissatisfied with the delay required for the details of inferior changes, with which the welfare of large masses of the community is interwoven, and which cannot be carried into execution without either great precaution or great injustice.

The subjects which have principally occupied the attention

of the Ministers and of Parliament, during the past Session may be divided under the following heads:—

Ireland,	East India Charter,	Scotland,
Slavery,	Trade,	Poor Laws,
Finance,	Law,	Foreign Policy.
Bank Charter,	Corporations,	

On each of these subjects we shall make a few observations, and shall conclude by a short estimate of the conduct and character of the Members of the New Parliament. These details may be dry, but it is only by facts that either the Ministers or the Parliament can be judged; it is only by a detailed consideration of what has been done, that men can judge whether Lord Grey was sincere when he proclaimed that Reform should be “the means to an end,” and whether the new constituency deserved to rouse the suspicions expressed by the Duke of Wellington, or the terrors of Mr. Croker.

IRELAND.

The state of Ireland was the first great question brought before Parliament; and in fact was the most prominent subject of the Session. It is true that there were other questions of great moment and urgency, but the state of Ireland admitted no delay.

When the present Government took office, the storm which had been gathering for the previous half century had burst. The first remedies which they applied were such as, if they had been adopted by their predecessors, might have been sufficient. Measures were adopted for removing the collision between the tenantry and the clergy as to tithes, and for throwing the maintenance of the Establishment upon the Landlord;* Public education was made equally accessible to the Catholic and the Protestant;† Agriculture and Manufactures were encouraged;‡ a large fund was appropriated for the promotion of public works;§ the road to prosperity was opened, if the

* 2 & 3 William IV. c. 119.

† The system of public education introduced by Mr. Stanley.

‡ The repeal of the duty on coal (all the coal used in Ireland being necessarily imported) was a great boon both to the manufacturers and agriculturists. There were many other measures that gave ample evidence of the disposition of the Government to relieve the productive classes of the community. 2 William IV. c. 17. 2 William IV. c. 17. 2 William IV. c. 21. 2 William IV. c. 17. 2 William IV. c. 31. 2 & 3 William IV. c. 52. 2 & 3 William IV. c. 77.

§ 1 & 2 William IV. c. 33. Under this Act not less than 230,000*l.* have been already advanced, for making bridges, docks, harbours, canals, roads, and other works, for the internal improvement of Ireland. Applications for loans to the amount of 297,000*l.*, for similar objects, are now under consideration.

peaceable and industrious portion of the community could only obtain protection while treading it. But that protection they had not, nor did it appear that in the existing state of the law they *could* have it. We are wrong, perhaps, in using the word law, for law, in its usual acceptation, that is, an instrument by which the persons and properties of the innocent are secured, had almost ceased to exist; and the question was, shall Ireland be suffered to fall into the sanguinary barbarism of Abyssinia, or, whatever be the difficulty, whatever be the risk, whatever even be the certain sacrifice, shall she, at that risk, or at that sacrifice, be restored to civilization? Read Lord Althorp's catalogue of one year's crimes for Leinster—murders and attempts to murder, 163—robberies, 317—burglaries, 182 burnings, 194—houghing cattle, 70—other wilful and malicious injuries to property, 407—serious assaults, 744—illegal notices, 913.

The Ministry saw, that unless they could at once devise some remedy, all was lost. Of what avail would it have been, that they had attempted palliations? No remedy, no relief could be applied, till the moral state of society was renovated; till some political, as well as personal liberty was restored. Ministers did not disguise from themselves or the House, that the Coercion Bill was an infringement of the Constitution. They put it forward expressly as an infringement, but as a necessary infringement. It was thus referred to by Lord Grey, in his speech on the Irish Church Reform Bill, when he said, "I feel more strongly in reference to the immediate question of Ireland, in consequence of the necessity, the unfortunate necessity,—under which we found ourselves, at the beginning of this session, of proposing a law which, as we did not conceal from ourselves or from the public, was a measure of extreme severity, a departure from the spirit of the Constitution, only to be justified in a case of extremity. God forbid, my Lords, that the measure should become permanent; since its continuance can only be rendered expedient by the continuance of evils, which ought to be remedied in the interval of tranquillity which it affords." The measure passed both Houses by large majorities; the country as well as Parliament admitted its necessity. Its success has been the very highest of which a preventative measure is capable. It has succeeded, not only without having been abused, but almost without having been employed. Only one county (Kilkenny) has been proclaimed; this was done on the 10th of April; and the following is the result. The outrages in that county in the year 1833, were, Jan. 196.—Feb. 178.—March, 144.—April, 47,—May, 15.

The measure next in importance, was the Irish Church Bill; one of a series of measures intended to remove those causes of complaint, and disturbance, which rendered the Coercive Law necessary. The provisions of this bill have been so recently discussed, that it would be useless to enter into any detail. Its most important features were, the abolition of Church Rates, or, as they are called in Ireland, Vestry Cess, the suppression of 10 bishopricks out of 22, and the application of their revenues to purposes of religious instruction.

Those who look forward with eagerness to reform in the English Church Establishment, hailed the measure not only as an act of justice to Ireland, but as affording some clue to what may be the feelings and conduct of Ministers, when they shall redeem their promise, by entering on the arduous task of Church Reform in England.

The Grand Jury, and the Jury Bills, also were subjects of vast importance in the affairs of Ireland; a great part of the business of Grand Juries, in Ireland, is the making presentments for public works, chiefly roads. These were usually made by persons most interested in the work to be done, often the Grand Jurors themselves, and often for making roads, from which the public derived no benefit. None but those acquainted with the jobbing, and the malversation of an Irish Grand Jury, could conceive the abuses attending and incidental to their presentments. A few years ago, the evil was partially remedied; but enough remained to make the existence of these presentments a grievous burthen on the country.

The Act passed provides, that a certain number of persons, paying the highest amount of county rate, shall be associated with the magistrates at Sessions, to judge of their presentments, and that all works to be executed, shall be done by open contract, and a certain portion of the rate-payers are vested with a control over the expenditure.

The object of the Jury Bill was to promote the better administration of justice, by securing the impartial selection of Juries, and preventing the intimidation of witnesses, which was done by assimilating the law of Ireland as far as possible to that of England, under Sir R. Peel's Jury Act; this was aided by the change of Venue Bill, which gave an opportunity of removing the trial of offences beyond the reach of local heats and animosities.

Two Commissions have been issued, from which much good may be expected—one for inquiring into the Corporations of Ireland, and the other for inquiring into the state of the laboring classes in Ireland. Mr. Sergeant Perrin is at the head of the former, the Archbishop of Dublin and the Catholic

Primate are members of the latter. Such names are a security to the public that the inquiries will be efficiently conducted.

One of the last Acts of the Session was for the relief of the Clergy in Ireland, and, to afford time for settling the terms upon which an equitable commutation of tithe might eventually be effected.

As we can say no good, so we shall not say any thing of the conduct of the Opposition Lords on some of these measures; whether they became in the eleventh hour convinced of their necessity, or whether they at last found it was not expedient to place themselves in direct opposition to the Commons, needs not here to be discussed. What, however, can be said for the sincerity of those, who opposing the Irish Church Reform Bill solely on religious grounds, could choose no more appropriate leader than the Duke of Cumberland!!

THE ABOLITION OF WEST INDIA SLAVERY.

On this subject at the commencement of the Session, the minds of reflecting men were fixed with intense, and anxious expectation. That it would—that it must, be brought under the consideration of the Reformed Parliament, in their first Session, no one could doubt, who had noted the zeal of its promoters, and the hold which it had evidently taken upon the public mind. The excited hopes, and growing intelligence of the Slave population rendered its final settlement at no distant period, inevitable, and every day of its postponement was fraught with augmented danger. Yet the gigantic extent of the subject, the vast commercial interests involved in its development, the conflicting principles and prejudices which were to be encountered, the great moral and political problems which were to be solved, might well justify the apprehensions of those who felt that, while the crisis was inevitable and the danger imminent, the difficulties which were to be encountered were hardly less than insuperable. On the other hand, to allow such a question to be thrown loosely before Parliament, the Country, and the Colonies; to furnish the mere assertion of a principle, independently of the practical details by which it could be carried into effect; to leave the subject in the hands of those who were not responsible for the working of the great experiment; would manifestly have been a dereliction of duty on the part of Ministers, a shrinking from the high and arduous task which they had to perform, that would in itself have insured failure, and realized the most disastrous anticipations of the most timid. Unappalled, therefore, by the magnitude of the difficulties, increased, as those difficulties were, by the excitement under which the subject must be

brought forward, and the exorbitant demands of the West Indians and the Abolitionists, Ministers boldly and wisely determined to grapple with the question; and in the name of his colleagues, Lord Althorp promised that it should be done.

The performance of that promise is the Act for the Abolition of Slavery: and a brief examination of its three principal features—the Extinction of Slavery—the Compensation to the Proprietors, and the Apprenticeship of the emancipated Negroes, will shew that Ministers have faithfully redeemed their pledge; and that Parliament has honestly, prudently, and fearlessly performed its part.

The Act provides for the entire extinction of Slavery in the British Colonies on the 1st of August, 1834.

From that day, Slavery becomes altogether illegal; it is no longer protected, nor even recognized by the law; it is denounced, proscribed, abolished for ever, throughout all the dominions which own the British sway.

Can we hesitate in pronouncing that this early *period* fixed for this great act of justice, is completely satisfactory to every friend of liberty and humanity. Is it not *immediate* Emancipation?

With regard to the compensation, the sum of 20,000,000*l.* which the Act provides to be distributed among the Proprietors of Slaves, has been considered by the proprietors resident in this country sufficiently satisfactory to induce them to promise their co-operation here, and their influence in the Colonies, in carrying into effect the intentions of the Government, and the enactments of the Imperial Legislature; and there is no risk of the liberality of the country being abused, since it is provided that no part of the compensation is to be paid to any Colony, unless it has adopted and conformed to the humane views of the Mother Country.

When it is considered that, in the early part of the discussions on this branch of the subject, the Abolitionists denied in toto the right of the Proprietors to the services of their Slaves, or to any compensation for the loss of those services, and that, on the other hand, the West India Proprietors valued their Slaves alone at £44,000,000.; and further, that during the whole Session the public mind has been more than usually sensitive to the burthen of taxation, and more than ever alive to the necessity of every practicable economy and retrenchment—it must be admitted that to produce a satisfactory result has required great firmness as well as discretion on the part of Ministers.

Had the Act merely granted emancipation to the Slave, and compensation to the Proprietor, it might have been satis-

factory to those whose personal and pecuniary interests were directly affected, but it certainly would not have been safe.

It was absolutely necessary that some plan should be devised, which should prevent the emancipated slave from relapsing into the condition of the savage ; which should afford opportunity for adapting the laws and institutions of the Colonies to the entirely altered condition of society, and which might prevent the loss to the West India Proprietors, and to the trade and revenues of this country, that would necessarily ensue from an immediate and total cessation of the cultivation of Colonial produce.

For these purposes, the Act provides that every Negro shall, immediately upon his emancipation, become an apprentice to his present master for a period not exceeding six years.

During this interval the Slaves who are engaged in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar, and other agricultural produce are to work for their masters, as apprentices, for 45 hours per week, in consideration of being provided with all the necessaries of life in the same manner as at present.

By this arrangement, a supply of labour to a moderate extent is insured to the proprietors: they are protected from the incalculable inconvenience and danger which would accrue from the uncontrolled vagrancy and indolence of the Negroes, and they will be able, in this interval, not only to make such laws and police regulations, as the communities may require, but also to train up the Negro in habits of voluntary industry, and to fit him for the duties of a free citizen, which he will eventually have to perform.

The certain supply of labour which the apprenticeship provides, although insufficient for the production of the amount of produce now exported from the Colonies, will probably be sufficient to prevent the necessity of resorting to the slave Colonies of other nations for the supply of that produce, which would be a direct encouragement to that very system we are in the act of abolishing.

The principal advantage of the apprenticeship, however, accrues to the Negroes themselves. They are, in fact, placed in a condition of greater comfort than that of the peasantry of any civilized nation.

For a very moderate amount of labour, leaving a large reserve of unrestricted leisure, not only are the effective Negroes, but the whole Slave population, to be maintained by the Proprietors during the apprenticeship.

The duty imposed upon them of working 45 hours per week for their employer, secures them from the evils and vices of a vagrant and idle life ; and, at the same time, the mutual de-

pendence of the employer and the apprentice, arising out of this limitation of the hours of compulsory labour, will lead necessarily to a system of voluntary contracts to work for wages.

Those who objected to the system of apprenticeship, described it as enforcing work without wages, but overlooked or suppressed the fact—that wages, and those by no means inadequate, will be given to the apprenticed labourer in the form of maintenance and lodging, and other necessities for himself, and also for those whom he would otherwise be bound to support.

Nor must it be overlooked, that, in a state of Slavery, the master is bound to furnish his Slaves with houses and provision grounds, to which they in general become much attached, and which, from long habit, they have learnt to consider as their own individual property. The nature of rent, or the very idea of making any payment for leave to occupy these premises, has never entered into the imagination of a Negro: yet it is equally clear, that when he ceases to be a slave, the master is no longer bound to furnish him with lodging and land gratuitously; and that, on the other hand, any attempt to eject the Negro population, would be not only hazardous, but impracticable. It seems, therefore, a wise provision, that by an intermediate state of attachment to the soil, the Negro should, for a time, retain possession of his present habitation, and during the term of his contract pay for it, and for the annual supplies of clothing which, on the present system of Trade, are regularly supplied from Great Britain according to the demand, by a reasonable proportion of labour in lieu of money.

Nor were those who opposed this part of the Government plan, prepared to agree in the substitution of any expedient to meet the various evils which it was intended to prevent.

Such are the principal features of the measure, by means of which Ministers have attempted to solve the great problem which was submitted to them. The details of the plan they have properly left to the local experience of the various Colonial legislatures.

To those legislatures, also, they have wisely afforded the opportunity of anticipating, by laws of their own, the enactments of the British Parliament, and of acquiring the gratitude and confidence of the Slave Population, by spontaneously conferring upon them the blessings and privileges of freedom.

On one subject alone, the Ministers have felt that its peculiar nature, and the circumstances of some particular Colonies, made it necessary to legislate immediately and decisively. All restrictions upon the teachers of the Christian religion in the British Colonies, are removed by this Act, except such as exist in the Mother Country.

It would be foreign to our purpose, and would exceed the limits to which we are restricted, to enter more into the details of this important change in the condition of West Indian Society; but it may be added, as a material feature in the case, that to superintend the due execution of the proposed system, and to ensure to the masters and apprentices a fair and impartial administration of the laws which regulate their mutual relations, a body of gentlemen will be sent from this country, to act as special magistrates, unconnected with local prejudices, independent of colonial influence, whose presence, dispersed as they will be throughout the Islands, cannot but give confidence to all classes, inspire a freedom of increased connection with the Mother Country, and of secure participation in the impartial administration of the law. Much, no doubt, remains to be done, for the purposes of police, of religious instruction, and of general education: but we doubt not that the provisions will be matured in a spirit of wise and liberal policy, and that on those important matters the Colonial Legislatures will cordially adopt the views, and co-operate with the exertions of the British Parliament, the Government, and the Nation.

FINANCE.

To carry retrenchment into our public establishments, so far as can possibly be done without impairing their efficiency; and to apply the surplus revenue, whether arising from increased consumption, or diminished expenditure, to the relief of those branches of industry on which taxation most severely and injuriously presses; are the principles of financial policy professed by the present Government.

We shall endeavour to give a brief outline of the measures adopted with these views—shewing, on the one hand, the reductions effected in the Public Expenditure, and, on the other, the relief afforded by taxes repealed or reduced.

In 1830, when the present Government came into office, the total net income of the country was, in round numbers, 50,000,000*l.*, of this sum, 35,000,000*l.* were absorbed in the payment of the Debt, Civil List, Half-pay of the Army and Navy, Superannuated and Retired Allowance to Civil Officers, and other fixed charges: leaving about 15,000,000*l.* susceptible of reduction, exclusive of any diminution which might be effected in the expenses of collection.

It is important that this distinction should be borne in mind; because, either from ignorance or malevolence, or from both, it is repeatedly and pertinaciously asserted—How paltry the reduction of a million or two on fifty millions! We respectfully beg our readers to hold fast by the fifteen millions, and to

dismiss the fifty millions altogether from their imaginations ; for, although the country, unhappily, has to raise the larger sum, the Government can only effect reduction on the smaller sum. To confound two things so essentially distinct, is a financial delusion—to be carefully avoided by those who would form a just estimate of the value and merit of the reductions which have been made, and of the probable extent to which they may eventually be carried.

The Expenditure of the year ending the 5th April, 1832, was	£47,858,000
The Expenditure of the year ending the 5th of April, 1833	45,365,000
Actual Diminution of Expenditure in 1833	2,493,000
The estimated Expenditure of the present year, ending 5th April, 1834	44,922,000
Further reduction of Expenditure	443,000
Total estimated diminution of expenditure between April, 1832, and April, 1834	2,936,000

A reduction will thus have been effected, during the years 1831, 1832, and 1833, to the extent of about 3 millions upon that portion of the expenditure which admits of reduction, viz. about 15 millions.

A comparison of the Estimates of the present with those of the preceding years, leads to the same satisfactory result. In 1817, the Committee of Finance, after a laborious investigation, gave an estimate of the amount to which they thought it possible to reduce the charge for the Army, Navy, Ordnance, and Miscellaneous Service. That estimate was 17,350,000*l*.

From that period to the present, the following have been the Estimates annually voted.

Amount voted.		Amount voted.	
1818	£18,970,959	1826	£17,942,963
1819	18,488,447	1827	18,745,360
1820	19,673,717	1828	17,776,999
1821	18,358,651	1829	17,626,855
1822	16,679,633	1830	16,648,762
1823	15,878,313	1831	17,782,487
1824	16,734,713	1832	15,411,571
1825	17,593,252	1833	14,622,219

The estimates of the present year are, therefore, 2,720,513*l*. below the amount which the Committee of 1817 thought it possible to reach. They are 3,162,000*l*. less than the estimates of 1831, and 2,730,835*l*. less than the average of 1828, 1829, and 1830, being the three years of the preceding Government.

The Duke of Wellington, during these three years, carried into effect many vigorous measures of economy. In this respect we are ready to admit the merit of his Government, but on the same ground we claim still higher praise for those who followed; their task was more difficult; superfluous offices had been already greatly diminished, and farther reduction was to be effected on a diminished expenditure. "We have reaped the harvest of reduction," said a member of the late government, "and left only the gleanings to our successors:"—these then are the gleanings—they equal the harvest in amount, and far exceed it in the difficulty of the gathering.

The reductions which have been made in the estimates for the Army, Navy, Ordnance, and Miscellaneous Services, will be shewn by the annual charge for the last three years. —

	Navy.	Army.	Ordnance.	Miscellaneous.
1831	£5,842,835	7,551,000	1,478,900	2,900,400
1832	£4,505,000	7,006,000	1,634,800	2,133,900
1833	£4,658,000	6,673,000	1,455,200	1,835,000

We insert a most important account, showing some of the diminutions made in the Salaries of the principal Officers of State, of the Judges, Commissioners, and others, whose allowances exceed 1,000*l.* per annum, and also the reduction in the Diplomatic Department.

*Amount of Reductions in Salaries of 1,000*l.* and upwards, since 1830.*

	Emolu- ments in 1829.	Emolu- ments in 1833.	Saving.
Treasury - - - -	£20,900	£14,800	£6,100
Home, Foreign, and Colonial Depart- ments - - - -	52,828	36,100	16,728
Amiralty - - - -	19,940	7,500	12,440
Army - - - -	17,876	8,455	9,421
King's Household, &c. - -	11,286	2,000	9,286
Customs - - - -	64,520	18,400	46,120
Excise - - - -	14,300	7,200	7,100
Judges and Courts of Law - -	52,492	38,000	14,492
Ireland - - - -	49,903	32,989	16,914
Colonial Agents, &c. - -	5,305	1,300	4,005
Miscellaneous - - - -	6,298	-	6,298
DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR OFFICES.			
Ambassadors - - - -	55,300	45,900	9,400
Envoys Extraordinary, and Ministers Plenipotentiary - - - -	50,300	38,900	11,400
Ministers resident abroad - -	14,200	10,750	3,450
Secretaries - - - -	15,000	11,375	3,625
Consuls, &c. - - - -	45,450	21,800	22,650
General Total - - - -	494,898	295,469	199,429

During the years 1831 and 1832 the total number of offices reduced on the several establishments amounted to 1265, and their salaries to 220,000*l*. From the retired list 506 persons have also been brought into active employment, as vacancies occurred. This sacrifice of their patronage, proves the sincere desire of the Government to effect every possible saving.

But it is not only in the expenditure of the public income that great saving has been effected; the expense of collecting it has also been greatly diminished; indeed, to such an extent has this been carried in some departments, that it may reasonably be doubted, whether such reductions, in justice to the fair trader, and without risk to the revenue, can be carried further. In the Customs, during the years 1831 and 1832, not less than 414 offices have been abolished, and a saving of 29,000*l*. effected.

In the Excise, during the years 1830, 1831, and 1832, the number of persons reduced was - - - 507

Amount of reduction in salaries	-	-	-	-	£68,000
Official expenses reduced	-	-	-	-	72,500
Superannuation and retiring allowances diminished	-	-	-	-	4,750
Total annual reduction	-	-	-	-	£145,250

The same spirit of economy has been carried into the colonial establishments. The salaries and emoluments of Governors, Judges, Collectors, and Superintendents, have all been submitted to a most rigorous examination, and their respective offices and establishments have been more or less reduced.

1. In the establishments at Malta, Gibraltar, Cape of Good Hope, Barbary Consuls, Fernando Po, Gold Coast, Ceylon, New South Wales, Van Dieman's Land, Swan River, and Mauritius,—

The total charge, when the reduction commenced, was	-	-	-	-	£411,745
The immediate saving	-	-	-	-	72,703
And the prospective saving to	-	-	-	-	61,318
Making a total saving of	-	-	-	-	134,021

2. In the establishments at Lower and Upper Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Bermuda, &c.

The charge at commencement of reduction was	-	-	-	-	£59,890
The immediate saving was	-	-	-	-	17,752
The prospective saving	-	-	-	-	21,549
Total saving	-	-	-	-	39,301

3. In Trinidad, British Guiana, Bahamas, and St. Lucia,—

The charge at commencement of reduction was	-	-	-	-	£101,082
Immediate saving was	-	-	-	-	43,877
Prospective saving	-	-	-	-	7,416
Total saving	-	-	-	-	51,293

The total amount of reduction, therefore, in the Colonies, is as follows:

Charge, when reduction commenced, was	-	-	-	£572,717
Immediate saving	-	-	-	£134,332
Prospective saving	-	-	-	90,283
Total saving	-	-	-	224,615
Charge as it will eventually stand	-	-	-	£348,102

But there are persons, who, in the genuine spirit of detraction being compelled to admit the amount of reduction, contend that it has been effected by the sacrifice of the inferior officers. The answer to this charge is, that

The average salary of persons reduced under the late Government, amounts to	-	-	-	-	£117 16 1
Under the present Government to	-	-	-	-	226 7 8

But an answer still more triumphant can be given. The first experiment of reduction made by the present Government was upon themselves; and on the salaries of the higher political offices of the State, amounting to 143,617*l.*, a saving of 21,394*l.* has been effected, being an actual deduction of 15 per cent.

We have now alluded to the different departments in which reductions have been made, and the extent to which they have been carried; the vast number of offices and establishments abolished or reduced, will give some idea of the labor required to carry them into effect. Their aggregate amount may, in round numbers, be stated at 3,000,000*l.*; reducing the expenditure susceptible of reduction from 15,000,000*l.* to 12,000,000*l.* The whole of this sum of 3,000,000*l.* has been applied to give relief from taxation, and the following statement will show, that in administering this relief, the object which the Government had in view, was to stimulate industry, and to augment the resources of the country, by promoting the interests of trade, manufactures and commerce. In this object they have persevered at the risk, and almost at the expense, of their own popularity.

Relief from taxation in 1831 and 1832.

Printed Goods	-	-	-	-	-	£550,000
Coals and Slates	-	-	-	-	-	900,000
Candles	-	-	-	-	-	500,000
Hemp, Drugs, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	140,000
						2,090,000
Deduct impost on cotton wool	-	-	-	-	-	300,000
						1,790,000
Total relief						£1,790,000

Further relief, effected during the present session:

Tiles	-	-	-	-	-	-	£37,000
Marine insurances	-	-	-	-	-	-	100,000
Advertisements	-	-	-	-	-	-	75,000
Assessed taxes and farming stock	-	-	-	-	-	-	440,000
Cotton wool	-	-	-	-	-	-	300,000
Soap	-	-	-	-	-	-	593,000
							<hr/>
In 1833							1,545,000
In 1831-32							1,790,000
							<hr/>
							£3,335,000

The various duties repealed or reduced by Lord Althorp, are as follow:

Printed Cottons, Coals and Slates, Candles, Tiles, Small Receipt Stamps, Land Tax on Personal Estates, Duty on Pamphlets, on Travellers or Riders, on Clerks, Book-keepers and Office-men, Overseers, Managers, Shopmen, Warehousemen, and Cellarmen, Duty on Tax Carts, and Horse Tax payable by Market Gardeners,—*repealed*.

Advertisement duty, Soap duty, House Tax on Shops, and House Tax payable by Licensed Victuallers,—*reduced one half*.

Hemp, Drugs, Marine Insurances, Cotton Wool,—*reduced*.

Tax on Houses, of 10*l* value—*reduced one third*.

Tax on Houses from 10*l*. to 18*l*.—*reduced progressively*.

The Government might have gained more applause, if they had gratified the Counties by a reduction of the Malt Duty or the Towns by a repeal of the House and Window Duty; but we beg the most clamorous advocates for the repeal of the House Duty to remember this fact, *that the total number of Houses in Great Britain is 2,846,179, and the number assessed to the House Tax, 430,617, leaving six-sevenths of the whole totally exempt*: then let them tell us whether this Tax can be considered as one which presses exclusively, or even mainly, on the industrious poor. The Repeal of the Duties on Coals, Candles, Soap, and Leather, is felt even in the lowly tenement, where Assessed Taxes are unknown; at the same time we admit, that where distress from other causes exists, as in some districts in London, the pressure of these taxes is severe, and in all their irregularity is objectionable.

Another objection has been made to the repeal of such duties as those upon Tax-Carts, Tiles, &c. In reply to this argument, we may appeal to the farmers of Essex, and Norfolk, whose petitions loaded the table of the House of Commons, and to the tile manufacturers of Stafford and Middlesex, whose applications were before the Treasury. The fact is, the supposed insignificance of these taxes is only the discovery of those who wish to undervalue the reduction.

In the public accounts it has been admitted, that simplicity has been introduced; no mystification is attempted, no de-

ception practised; and as the value of this can be best appreciated by one who has waded through masses of accounts, which almost seem designed to perplex and deceive, we may conclude by quoting the honorable testimony which Mr. Hume has borne to the merit of the Government in this respect: "I have always said, that one great advantage has been derived from the accession of the present Ministers to office. They have simplified the Civil List Charges, and brought them under the proper heads. I also give them every credit for laying open to inquiry every branch of expenditure; and there is now no department into which Members of the House cannot inquire, and no accounts connected with the Finances of the Country have been refused by the Noble Lord. The House, then, is now placed in a situation, in which, with a little trouble it can have any statement of the national finances that any honorable Member can wish for."

Navy and Army.—There is no department of the Government in which more effectual reductions have taken place than the expenses of the Navy. The same rigid economy which marked the estimates of 1832, marks the estimates of this year.

In 1829 the sum voted was	-	-	-	-	£5,878,794
1830	-	-	-	-	5,594,955
1831	-	-	-	-	5,870,551
1832	-	-	-	-	4,878,634
1833	-	-	-	-	4,658,134

As regards the estimates of 1831, these must be in some measure taken as those of the former government, as, when the present Ministers succeeded to office, they were, in fact, in a great measure prepared. The estimates for this year are nearly a million below of those 1830; and as regards the last year, are less by 220,000*l*.

It is important to observe, that this reduction of nearly a million, was made entirely on what is termed the *Effective Establishment*; the non-effective, viz. the half pay, superannuation, &c. (amounting to nearly a third of the whole expenses) being a fixed charge.

A reduction of 74,078*l*. per annum, in the Civil Establishment of the Navy, has been made since the present Ministers came into office, of which 16,800*l*. was in respect of salaries above 800*l*. a year.*

* 12 Commissioners	-	-	£14,200
1 Paymaster of Marines	-	-	1,000
61 Superior Officers of Yards	-	-	19,712
37 Inferior Ditto	-	-	3,885
102 Clerks	-	-	33,276
<hr/>			
213			£74,073

The debt of the Navy, which in 1830 was 1,314,000*l.* is now reduced to 977,000*l.*

That these reductions have not been made at the expense of the efficiency of the service, is shewn by the fact, that two ships of 120 guns have been launched in the present year, one of 92 guns, and several frigates, and that there is more timber, &c. in the dock yard, ready for use, than when the Duke of Wellington quitted office*.

Again, it may be observed, that the services performed by the Navy in the last year (almost as considerable as would be requisite in a time of war,) afford ample proof that those extensive reductions have in nowise diminished its efficiency.

The ports of Holland were blockaded during a northern winter, and not a ship of the blockading force was lost. The whole Indian trade of Holland was arrested, and scarcely a ship escaped. In the Tagus and the Douro, a large Naval force was required for the protection of the property and persons of British subjects, and to command the reluctant neutrality of Spain. A large squadron is at present at the mouth of the Dardanelles, for the purpose of upholding our influence in a quarter intimately connected with our maritime interests. The agitated state of the Slave Colonies, has made an increased Naval force necessary in the West Indies, and the Mauritius. If, therefore, the reductions already stated have been made at a time when such important services were required, it may fairly be inferred, that great as the reductions have been, a more settled state of our foreign relations will admit of a further reduction of the force itself, and consequently a still greater diminution of expenditure in this department.

In addition to the reduction in the departments of the Navy, the whole subject of Army and Navy appointments was referred to a committee, and the names of the persons selected gave a full warrant that the inquiry would be searching, and the reduction as unsparing as was consistent with the efficiency of the service.

The committee have come to certain resolutions, whereby the principle of the abolition of all sinecures is announced, and

* An account of the quantities of Hemp, Cordage, and Timber, in store on the 31st of December, 1830, and 30th June, 1833:—

IN STORE.

31st Dec. 1830.	30th June, 1833.
Hemp 7,394 Tons.	11,446 Tons.
Cordage 3,500	3,435
10,894	14,881
Timber 56,633 Loads.	60,717 Loads.

they propose to abolish prospectively all sinecure garrison appointments, and to substitute a scale of rewards for distinguished services, the amount of which is fixed at 8,000*l.* a year. To ensure as far as possible the best distribution of this fund; to prevent its misapplication, by being lavished on favourites, instead of being the reward of veterans, the names of those on whom it is to be conferred, are to be laid annually before Parliament, so that the responsibility for the due distribution rests with the Ministers, and will be open to public animadversion.

All Civilians are immediately to vacate garrison appointments, except where special grounds for their not doing so can be shewn. The large income derived by the Governor of Gibraltar from local revenues, and Lord Rosslyn's sinecure, are prospectively abolished.

Some savings are also proposed to arise from the mode of paying for the clothing, and for the pay of colonels of regiments. The cases of many general officers, who attained in 1814 the unattached pay, without having performed services which entitled them to it, are to be reconsidered, and the staff at head-quarters is recommended to be reduced.

Of the sinecures in the Navy, only those of the Vice and Rear Admiral of England are to be retained. The Lieutenant and Major General, and Colonels of Marines, are to be abolished, and an annual sum equal to their pay is proposed, (as in the case of the Army,) to be substituted as a reward for distinguished services. A strong opinion is expressed against Brevets, or the creation of Flag Officers, unless urgently called for by public necessity. The total amount of present saving will be about 16,800*l.*, and the prospective saving about 47,800*l.*; to which may be added the saving to be deduced from the appropriation of the revenues of the Crown in Guernsey and Jersey, and that arising from a reduction of the staff at head-quarters. The amount either of the present or future savings may be small, but the principle thus established by the Committee is most important, and will go far towards reconciling the country to expenses which henceforward cannot be misapplied.

There is one branch of the Finance of the country which the hand of Reform has never reached; for amidst all the various inquiries which have of late years been directed into the Public Expenditure, the Excise* has been by much ingenuity kept untouched, as a kind of preserve for the breeding of pa-

* The Commission which issued at the suggestion of Sir H. Parnell, some years ago, was confined to Scotland and Ireland.

tronage. Year after year has heaped vexatious statutes upon statute till, at last, their provisions, from their very absurdity and complexity, became almost a dead letter; and the officers have, in many instances, ceased to regard them; but the staff has been kept up, notwithstanding, from the very institution of the Excise, its vexatious and oppressive regulations have been a source of constant reproach. Even the Tory Johnson, defines Excise, as "a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but by wretches hired by those to whom the Excise is paid."

In the beginning of this Session, the Ministry proceeded to break in on this hallowed ground of patronage; and to search into the vexations and evils of a system which all had deprecated, but which seemed to be doomed to perpetual continuance. No hope, of course, could be held out for the removal of one of the powerful sources of taxation: yet much might be done in repealing unnecessary and vexatious regulations, and in abolishing useless offices. In April last, a commission was appointed to inquire into the management and collection of the Excise Revenue, with a view not only of diminishing the expense of the different departments, but of relieving, as much as possible, the public and the different trades, from the interference of the Excise. The placing Sir Henry Parnell at the head of this commission, was, at once, a guarantee that the inquiry would be searching and effectual; and a proof that the Government were inclined to select the fittest person for the examination, even though he might be found in the ranks of their opponents. These Commissioners have already made one report, in which they recommend the abolition of all Excise supervision on Tea. The advantage and relief to be derived from this, the first fruits of the labors of the Commission may be judged of, when it is stated, that the number of dealers who will thus be relieved from a harassing, useless, and oppressive inquisition, amounts to above one hundred thousand.

A second report, respecting *Wine*, is in great forwardness; which, it is understood, will be to the same effect as that on Tea. The survey on Beer, which is still kept up to the inconvenience of the trade, and, one should almost suppose, for no other purpose, as the duties have been repealed, must share the same fate. The savings, it is understood, which will result from the removal of this heap of vexatious and useless interference, including some minor reductions in contemplation, will amount to little less than 100,000*l.* per annum.

Besides this, it is understood, that the Commissioners will recommend the total reduction of duty on many small articles,

in which the expense of collection comes to nearly the amount of the Duty collected.

BANK CHARTER.

To the measures we have already described, is to be added, the renewal of the Bank of England Charter, and the measures proposed for the regulation of Joint Stock Banking Companies.

A committee of Secrecy had been appointed during the preceding Session, to report on the expediency of renewing the exclusive privileges of the Bank: the inquiry continued from the end of May till the close of the Session; but though much valuable evidence was obtained, no report was agreed to, by which Government might have been assisted in the settlement of a question involving many interests, and surrounded by many difficulties.

The privileges of the Bank of England have been assailed on the one hand, as an odious monopoly; and on the other, they have been defended as a necessary protection to the public against fluctuations in the amount of paper money.

We are justified in asserting, that this latter opinion is that which is entertained by men whose experience, talent, and attention to the subject, entitle them to be received as the best authorities, on a question requiring very close consideration. It has been clearly shewn that competition, however generally beneficial, must in such cases lead to pernicious results: that it has a tendency in periods of increasing prices, unduly to expand the currency, thus stimulating improvident speculation; which, in its turn, is followed by panic, sudden contraction, and distress—that one Bank of Issue is enabled to control and regulate the issues according to the Foreign Exchanges, with not only the least, but also the most gradual fluctuation: and that the mode which the Bank of England has recently adopted for effecting this object, is at once simple and efficacious.

After much bitter experience, the truth of some principles at least has been recognized. Enactments against the exportation of gold coin are no longer heard of, and a system has at length been established, which under the control of publicity, promises to secure to the country a sound currency, and to afford every legitimate facility to mercantile transactions. On these grounds Lord Althorp vindicated the propriety of calling on the Legislature to renew, under certain conditions, the most important privileges of the Bank of England.

Our limits necessarily confine us to the statement of the *principles* which appear to have guided the Government in conducting a negotiation, involving many details of intricacy and difficulty, and the subject of long and repeated discussion.

These were—

The monthly publication of their accounts.

The repayment of a portion of the capital.

The partial repeal of the Usury Laws, which now impede the action of the Bank, and of all other similar establishments.

The annual payment by the Bank of £120,000, in return for the privileges continued to it.

Rendering the Bank of England Notes a legal tender, except at the Bank itself or its branches.

The quarterly return of the amount of circulation of all other Banks;—and

Certain provisions, to which we shall presently allude, for the improvement of Joint Stock Banks.

All these measures are more or less important, and their object and advantages were distinctly explained and enforced by Lord Althorp on introducing the subject to Parliament. They have received the sanction of the highest authority.

With respect to one of the provisions of the Bill, it must be admitted that much diversity of opinion has been expressed, and much good, as well as much evil predicted from it.

Defended by Tooke, Baring, Smith and Horsly Palmer, opposed by Peel, Herries and others, whose opinions have equal claims to consideration, the “Legal Tender,” may be regarded by many with doubt, not unmixed with apprehension. Depreciation of Bank of England paper, will it is affirmed, be the consequence of this measure: and it is probable that it was supported by some, because they hoped such would be the result; while it was opposed by others, who acknowledging its many advantages, dreaded this effect. It is not easy to imagine on what foundation they rested their hopes and their fears, unless it were some vague notion of a connection between this measure and that of rendering paper absolutely inconvertible. No two measures can be more essentially distinct. While Bank paper is immediately convertible in London, its depreciation *there*, will we presume, be admitted to be impossible; and while its value is maintained in London, the centre of the money transactions of the kingdom—and the market to which the Country Banker must resort, the likelihood of its depreciation *elsewhere* is not only inexplicable by any process of reasoning, but at variance with every fact that bears on the subject.

On the other hand, the advantages of the measures are manifest, it enables the Country Banker to meet a sudden run, without incurring the expense and delay of transporting the precious metals; and affords to the Bank of England that pro-

tection so essential to its security under the most trying of all circumstances—the occurrence of a sudden internal demand, the consequence of commercial panic after a long continued drain for exportation.

It will be borne in mind that such a panic is most likely to occur, when the Foreign Exchanges having been for a considerable period adverse to the country, an unnatural contraction of the currency, too frequently attended with commercial embarrassment, has been produced. The demand of the country banker at such a moment is regulated, not by the amount of his wants, but by the extent of his fears.

The treasure of the bank being then at its lowest ebb, such a demand is so peculiarly dangerous, that it may be doubted whether a single bank of issue, notwithstanding its decided advantages, would be desirable, unless it received that effectual protection which this measure affords.

The allowance retained by the bank has been censured by some as too great ; but those who take an enlarged view of the important functions of the bank of England, as the great centre and source of the circulation of the kingdom, charged with maintaining its value, with supporting it in times of discredit, and with distributing free of expense the requisite supply of gold, by means of its branches, (establishments of great public utility, but to the bank sources of expense rather than of profit,) will not be disposed to censure the Government for not wringing from the bank the utmost concession which it was possible to exact.

Some doubt having arisen with respect to the extent of the existing privileges which Government had agreed to confer on the bank, it was ascertained that they had no right to prevent the establishment in London of Joint Stock Banks of Deposit, and a declaratory clause to this effect was introduced into the new act.

The renewal of the bank charter offered a favourable opportunity for introducing certain regulations for the improvement of Joint Stock Banks. Established after the panic of 1825, at a time when all the evils of banking were attributed to one single cause, the limitation of the number of partners, the sole remedy was sought for in withdrawing that restriction. The formation of large companies was encouraged, on whom, as on private bankers, the privilege of issuing bank notes was conferred, without any other security to the public than that which was derived from the increased number of partners. Many highly respectable establishments were formed, others of an equivocal nature sprang up. To secure to the country the advantages which Joint Stock Banking Companies are capable of

conferring, and to give them higher claims to public confidence, was the object of the Government.

It was proposed by Lord Althorp to relieve them from certain restrictions to which they are at present subject, and to empower the Crown to grant them charters on complying with certain conditions, of which the most important was to pay up their capitals, and lodge a portion, as security, in the public funds. These were conditions which it was conceived no respectable establishment could have any difficulty in acceding to; which several had applied for as a protection, and which were calculated to restrain the proceedings of those whose hopes of profit are derived from encouraging a spirit of reckless speculation, and who impose on the public by appealing to the magnitude of a capital that exists only on paper.

Such were the measures proposed by the Government—such the objects which they had in view; and it is not saying too much to assert that the plan, when announced, received, as to its essential provisions, very general approbation. To the part of the measure that affects the Joint Stock Banks, opposition, however, began to manifest itself. The country bankers took the alarm. The immediate substitution of Bank of England paper was declared to be the necessary consequence of limited liability, and the extinction of the country banker the inevitable result. The Government, desirous that no unnecessary alarm should be excited, and that a complete conviction of the utility and necessity of these provisions should be felt, consented to postpone them till another session, leaving the subject before the public, that a more decided opinion might be pronounced on its merits. In the mean time an Act has been passed, by which Joint Stock Banks are permitted to render their notes payable in London, and to draw bills on London under 50*l*.

Although an important part of the measure as first introduced into Parliament has thus been deferred, that which affects the Bank of England has been brought to a successful termination, and the principles on which a sound and safe system of paper circulation may be conducted, have been distinctly recognized, and confirmed by Parliament.

Connected, however, with this subject, and of far greater importance than any law which has been passed upon it, is an Act of the House of Commons itself, not proceeding from the Government, or from any political party, but supported by men of all political creeds, and of all shades of opinion upon other topics—we allude to the resolution against any depreciation of the standard of value as by law established. Whoever recollects the language held in an out of Parliament at the be-

ginning of the session ; the meetings at Birmingham and Richmond Terrace ; the manifestos of the Currency Club ; the rumours which were circulated ; the highly raised hopes and loud boastings of a certain party—will admit this event to have been as important in its consequences to the country, as honourable to the Reformed House. The immense majority by which the resolution was carried, the triumph in argument achieved by its supporters, has crushed for ever the expectations of those who would unsettle all the monetary transactions of the Empire, and has given a degree of confidence to the industrious and productive classes of the community, which no other event could have inspired. Had the House of Commons performed no other act but this, it would have sufficiently shewn itself worthy of its high mission.

EAST INDIA CHARTER.

The settlement of the question as to the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, and the China Trade, was one of the most important measures submitted to Parliament ; and none, except, perhaps, the Slave Trade question, was surrounded with greater difficulties.

Whether the monopoly enjoyed by the Company, should be abolished?—and how, if that monopoly were abolished, the assets and liabilities of the Company were to be distributed between Commerce and Territory?—whether or not a share in the Administration of our Indian Empire should still be confided to the Court of Directors?—and how, if that course were adopted, the interests of the rulers could be made to coincide with the interests of the subjects?—whether or not Europeans should be allowed to settle in India?—and how, if so admitted, they should be restrained from excesses injurious to the Natives, and dishonourable to our Government?—it will be admitted, were questions of great moment, and of no inconsiderable difficulty.

The measure introduced by the Ministers for their solution, was, with some slight modifications, adopted by Parliament.

The trade with China has been thrown open.

The long and complicated account between Commerce and Territory, has been settled by a compromise, the advantage of which is shewn by its having been approved by moderate men on both sides.

A litigation which must have lasted for years, which never could have ended in a satisfactory adjudication, and during the pendency of which it would have been impossible to entrust the Company with any political functions, has thus been averted. The proprietors of India Stock have become creditors

of the country which is placed under their care. They will henceforth have a strong interest to improve its revenues: they can improve its revenues only by exerting their power for the maintenance of order, and the encouragement of industry.

The anomalous and pernicious union of imperial and economical functions in one body is at an end.

India is thrown open to European enterprise, and European capital. The legislative power of the Supreme Government has been strengthened. A commission has been established for the purpose of ascertaining, digesting, and as far as may be, assimilating those undefined and conflicting laws; the diversity and vagueness of which are among the heaviest grievances of India. The patronage, which has been bestowed by favour, is henceforward to be placed under restrictions which will ensure a constant supply of the most intelligent servants.

In the constitution of the Board of Control changes have been made, which, while they increase the efficiency of that department, diminish the Parliamentary influence of the Ministers.

And, finally, every office under the Company has been thrown open to every British subject, without distinction of colour, descent, caste, or religion.

Sir Robert Peel remarked, that it had been discussed in very thin houses, and attributed this to the general approbation with which its provisions were regarded by public men of all parties. Mr. O'Connell designated it as the Great Charter of the Indian people.

TRADE.

During no session of any preceding Parliament have the interests of commerce received greater attention, or have measures more important to the manufacturing and trading population of the country been submitted to its consideration. It is with pleasure, too, that we find the Reformed House of Commons adopting and even extending the enlightened principles of Commercial policy, which for some years have prevailed in our Legislature. When we recollect the often repeated statement of the sticklers for monopolies and restrictions, that these are the opinions of visionaries and theorists, discountenanced by all practical men, it is something to find the vast majority of the representatives of the Manufacturing and Commercial Towns, practical men themselves, adhering to these principles, and loudly disclaiming any advocacy of the old system.

The fluctuations of Commerce are, to this extent, under the control of Government. The wisest Government cannot

raise it to immediate prosperity, but the weakest has power to injure or destroy it. It may suffer under good Government, but cannot long prosper under bad; and, in the absence of Government, must perish. Though this, perhaps, is not often distinctly stated by commercial men, it is felt by them; and hence arises the sensibility of commerce to the conduct of Government, even when not directly affected by it. The manufacturers of Lille were not directly affected by the Revolution of 1830; but their works ceased within four days after the news arrived. Lille was perfectly tranquil, but their confidence, in the future prevalence of law over violence, was impaired. And thus, it will always be found, that, whenever men's reliance on the stability of the institutions of their country is shaken, the first proof of its being shaken, is the depression of trade. Some of the most alarming periods of English history, have occurred during the last three years. The most formidable, perhaps, was the period when the Tories, frightened at the evils which they had permitted, or occasioned, abandoned their posts: and this was the period of great embarrassment in trade. Confidence was inspired by the accession of their successors, and trade revived. It was felt, however, that the permanent stability of the institutions of the country depended on their being reformed; and that, under our balanced Constitution, the enemies of Reform might resist its peaceful accomplishment. The fear either of the loss of the Reform Bill, or of Reform being carried by means of Revolution, occasioned another period of commercial distress, which gradually wore away after the passing of the Bill. With the present prospect of the permanence of the Government, and of the continuance of the liberal commercial policy they have pursued, trade appears to be steadily increasing.* The industry of the country is in full activity; and though the profits of capital may be less than during the feverish period of the late war, their general amount is larger, and their benefit is spread over a broader surface.

We have treated, under other heads, of the renewal of the Bank and East India Charters—both, however, measures so important to the interests of Trade, that they must be considered as bearing on our Commercial prosperity in a far greater degree than any Legislative enactments which have for a long series of years come before Parliament.

* The following table is some evidence that trade has not suffered by the substitution of a reformed for an unreformed Parliament:

An account of the quantities of the undermentioned articles entered for Home consumption in the United Kingdom in the month ended 5th July, 1833, compared with the corresponding month of the preceding year. Also a similar account for the half year ended the 5th July, 1832 and 1833,

one place, the port of London. Under this bill, the importation will be permitted at every port of any importance, throughout the United Kingdom. The merchant of Liverpool, of Hull, of Glasgow, or of Cork, will, in future, import his cargo, or his parcel of Tea, at his own wharf, and lodge it in his own warehouse. The dealers of Manchester, and Leeds and Paisley, may supply themselves at the nearest port, and have no longer occasion to resort to London, to await the periodical sales of the Leadenhall Street Company. On the other hand, the duties, from *ad valorem* sums of 100*l.* per cent. have been changed to moderate duties, rated according to the quality of the Tea, which is divided into three classes, paying respectively, 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 2*d.* and 3*s.*, affording, according to the sale

An Account of the Number and Tonnage of Vessels which entered Inwards and cleared Outwards in the Ports of the United Kingdom in the month ended 5th July, 1833, compared with the corresponding month of the preceding year.—Also a similar Account for the half year ended 5th July, 1832 and 1833, distinguishing British from Foreign Ships, and the Coasting Vessels from those employed in the Foreign Trade, and exclusive of Vessels in ballast.

	ENTERED INWARDS.				ENTERED INWARDS.			
	In the Month ended 5th July.				In the Hf. Yr. ended 5th July.			
	1832.		1833.		1832.		1833.	
	Ves.	Tons.	Ves.	Tons.	Ves.	Tons.	Ves.	Tons.
British, - -	808	146,173	995	179,180	3,954	659,839	4,229	714,689
Foreign, - -	350	53,294	448	67,026	1,963	276,820	2,300	327,564
Total, - - -	1,158	199,467	1,443	246,206	5,917	936,659	6,529	1,042,253

COASTING VESSELS.

	ENTERED INWARDS.				ENTERED INWARDS.			
	In the Mh. ended 5th July.				In the Half year ended 5th July.			
	1832.		1833.		1832.		1833.	
	Ves.	Tons.	Ves.	Tons.	Ves.	Tons.	Ves.	Tons.
Employed between Great Britain and Ireland, Other Coasting vessels-	813	81,687	900	91,989	4,988	519,071	4,818	523,562
	9,755	716,810	9,583	745,677	54,813	4,063,047	53,506	4,161,109
Total,	10,567	798,497	10,483	837,366	59,801	4,582,118	58,324	4,684,671

prices of the last year, a reduction in duty, upon this important article, of from 15 to 25 per cent.

A variety of other measures mark equally the attention they have received at the hands of the Reformed House and of the Government. Acting upon the principles avowed last session, the Government, at the very opening of the present, resolved on devoting all that could be saved by economy, or spared from the exigencies of the State, to the relief of prostrated industry; to give additional facilities to our manufacturing establishments, and remove restrictions which fettered the exertions of our skill and ingenuity.

The duties on Soap, on Raw Cotton, on Marine Insurances, and on Advertisements, were greatly reduced; and as this appropriation of a large portion of surplus revenue precluded the possibility of relieving other great branches of commerce, that are oppressed by high duties, the Government applied the small additional relief they were able to afford, to the repeal or reduction of the duties on a number of articles, the sale of which was materially prejudiced by a system of taxation which greatly increased their price, without any proportionate advantage to the revenue. Upon the principles pursued last session, when the duties upon upwards of 300 articles, apparently of small importance, but really of the greatest to the manufacturers of the country, were reduced more than 150 different kinds of gums, dyes, semi-metals, and other articles, consumed in the Laboratory of Commerce, have been either admitted free of duty, or at a greatly reduced charge.

The result of these reductions has been most successful, and it is shown what may be done by the judicious application of small means. The consumption of many of the articles has more than doubled,* and they have been applied to a variety of purposes, from which their former high prices had excluded them.

* *Return for half year ending April 5, 1832, and April 5, 1833.*

	1832.	1833.
	<i>lbs.</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
Anatto, - - -	50,451	124,188
Balsam Copaiba, - - -	24,938	59,937
Boracic Acid, - - -	216,181	308,890
Cocoa Nuts, - - -	313,074	666,516
Gum Animi, - - -	43,535	70,651
India Rubber, - - -	29,958	178,676
Manna, - - -	8,296	20,797
Mastic, - - -	8,106	30,594
Sena, - - -	55,678	99,938
Sponge, - - -	15,483	25,006
Valeria, - - -	57,071	75,622
Vermicelli and Macaroni, - - -	41,012	79,864

The whole Commercial Laws of the Empire, its Navigation Laws, its Warehousing System, the Laws relating to its Colonial Possessions, the registry of shipping, the regulation of the customs, and the duties spread over one hundred Acts of Parliament, have been consolidated and brought into one volume, to the great convenience both of the merchant and the revenue officer. In spite of the clamor of some ignorant and interested individuals, a law has been introduced and passed, applying the principles of bonding to the great Manufacture of Sugar. The produce of all the world can now be imported into this country for refining, and the skill and capital of our manufacturers in this branch of industry are no longer confined to the produce of our own Colonies, for the preparation of the supply of refined sugar for the European markets; without, however, any interference with the monopoly of the Colonists in the market for consumption at home. Whilst these measures, too, have been carried through at home, no efforts have been wanting on the part of the Government to extend and promote our Foreign Trade, by influencing other States to adopt the same liberal policy which has been found so advantageous here. A commercial mission to France has already had the happiest effects. The removal of the prohibition on the export of Raw Silk from that country, an object declared last year, before a Committee of the House of Commons, to be of vital importance to our Silk Manufactories, has been already effected; but what is of far greater consequence, a change of public opinion, throughout the whole of the French Empire, upon this great subject, has taken place, which promises the most beneficial results to both countries. Freedom of Commerce has been the universal cry, and the manufacturing and commercial bodies take the lead in recommending the adoption of a sound and liberal system of commercial policy towards England.

Nor has Parliament been less active, or less zealous in its endeavors to ascertain the actual condition of the manufacturing and commercial interests, than in its efforts to improve them. A Committee was appointed for this purpose at the suggestion of the declaimers about distress, and a laborious and extended inquiry into all the principal branches of our national industry has been carried on. The evidence has been laid before the public; and although no report, owing to the alleged want of time, has accompanied it, sufficient proof will be found in the testimony of the principal witnesses, of the sound and healthy condition of all the great interests which were investigated. Indeed, the greatest of all, perhaps, consists in the absence of any report, which, it is understood, was mainly caused by those Members of the Committee who were the loudest in

their complaints of the distressed condition of the country. Whilst those Members who entertained a different opinion of the condition of the state of the country, were most anxious to give an exposition of the results to which inquiry had led; those who demanded it, shrank from any report, conscious, that, if founded on the evidence, it could not support their own views, and were thus glad to shelter themselves under silence, from the exposure of the real truth. This speaks for itself.

The attention of Parliament has not been confined to the interests of the higher or even of the middling classes of the Commercial community; it has heard the complaints of the workman as readily as those of his master. The Factory Bill was elaborately discussed, and there has been no question which has drawn forth more talent or information. The Members for the Manufacturing Towns took the most distinguished part in the debate. The House would probably have yielded to the dictates of its feelings, if Government had not interposed, at the risk of some unpopularity. The average labor of the working classes in the agricultural and manufacturing districts, being twelve hours a day, the reduction of it to ten, which must have been the inevitable result of Lord Ashley's Bill, would have proportionably affected the productive powers of the country; and the Government would not consent to this, without inquiring into the facts on which the measure was held necessary. A Commission of Inquiry was accordingly appointed, and although there may be a difference of opinion on the expediency of some of the medical questions issued by the Commissioners, a vast body of most valuable information on the state of the Manufacturing Districts was collected, upon which a Bill was substituted for Lord Ashley's not only less dangerous to the commercial prosperity of the country; but even better calculated to answer the benevolent purposes of those who conscientiously supported the original measure. This Bill reduces the daily labor of children; and what is of equal importance, provision is made in it for the education of the children of the manufacturing classes, and this too in a form which invites and admits of the co-operation of benevolent persons of all religious sects. Inspectors will be appointed to give effect to the measure, and their exertions, if successful, will procure for the next generation the advantage of a manufacturing community of increased intelligence and morality.

LAW REFORMS.

In enumerating the different labors of the Session, those relating to the Reform of the Law and the Law Courts are amongst the most important. What has been completed, and what is in progress, gives ample reason to expect that nearly

the whole of that masterly outline chalked out by the present Lord Chancellor, in his Law Reform speech in the House of Commons, will ere long be filled up and perfected. The Courts of Common Law, the Court of Chancery, and the Privy Council, the Criminal Law, and the Laws of Real Property, have all experienced the benefit of the interference of Parliament; a Commission has issued for arranging the statute law; and it may be said, without exaggeration, that more has been done for our jurisprudence during the session, than during the whole of the preceding century.

The administration of justice in the courts of Common Law, has been placed on an improved footing, by an Act for the Amendment of the Law, which removes many of the abuses which it is difficult to conceive should have been allowed to exist in the jurisprudence of an enlightened country. It authorizes the Judges to make regulations as to pleadings, so that the parties may know the exact question at issue, instead of being left to search for it in the maze of the record; and then obliged to bring up witnesses, at a vast expense, to prove facts which are not intended to be disputed. A security is given against unjust demands, by reducing from 20 years to 10, the period in which an action may be brought upon a Bond, except the creditor be under a legal disability, or there shall have been a written acknowledgment, or part payment of the debt during the interval. Many legal fictions and scholastic sophisms, which have survived the ends for which they were introduced, are destroyed. Pleas in abatement are limited and regulated; the executors and administrators of a deceased person are no longer protected from actions by those whose real or personal property he may have injured. Juries are allowed to give interest in actions for goods or money: and what is far above all, variances in pleading are to be judged by their real importance, and not to condemn the unfortunate suitor to pay the penalty of an error which is wholly immaterial, by this loss of his action.

The arbitration of suits is facilitated, by making the submission of the parties final, whatever may be their disposition to revoke it, and the attendance of witnesses before the Arbitrator is enforced,—so that proceedings in arbitration are relieved from the objections which have been held to counterbalance their cheapness and convenience.

The spirit of Reform has also intruded into the Court of Chancery, and shaken the prescriptive right which that Court seemed to possess to an immunity from the improvements which time had introduced into the administration of the other branches of the law. The Lord Chancellor brought a Bill for the reform of his Court into the House of Lords early in the Session. Such a Bill could not fail to call forth the opposition

not only of all the officers whose interests were to be effected by it, but also that of former Lord Chancellors, who having themselves suffered the existence of the evils without an attempt to correct them, could not look without jealousy on a proceeding of their successor calculated to afford to the suitors that benefit which under the rule of his predecessors had been so long withheld from them.

The bill was accordingly referred to a select committee, where the examination of witnesses lasted several weeks, and would probably have been continued to the end of the Session, as the only means of defeating the measure, had not the Lord Chancellor to avoid this evil, entered into a compromise with his opponents by postponing part of his plan to the next session. Thus mutilated, the bill descended to the Commons, and after it had undergone the ordeal of another committee there, was passed amidst the cheers of the whole House. This approbation had been well earned, for the measure, shorn as it is of its due proportions, is still most important. It strikes a heavy blow at the root of two of the worst evils in the proceedings of the court, the delay and the expense. These are necessarily to be found in the offices where the details of the business of the court are carried on—the six clerk's office, the Registrars' office, and the Masters' office, and all were comprised in the bill as it was brought forward by the Chancellor; but the six clerks were wrenched from his grasp by their friends in the House of Lords, at least they saved the office, with all its abuses, at the expense of four of the six clerks;* and the bill was confined to the Registrars and the Masters. Both these offices have undergone an entire revision. The Registrars derived their emolument from drawing up the decrees of the court, and were paid according to the length of the decree. No one doubted that five-sixths of the decree, in the form in which it was drawn, was superfluous; but the suitor was obliged to take it, at the call of the Registrar, who derived from it the remuneration for his labor. The time of the Registrar and the money of the suitor were thus sacrificed to a wretched system. The length of the decree caused great delay to take place before it could be completed; and until it was complete it was of no use to the suitor. The shortening of the decrees and orders, and the consequent reduction of fees, have at once removed these grounds of com-

* By the 28th section of 3 & 4 William IV. c. 94, four of the Six Clerks are abolished as they fall in, thus leaving the remaining two to do all the duties without any increase of salary. The 29th section of the Act suspends till May 1, 1834, the filling up of any places in the Sworn Clerk's Department of the Office, thus enabling Parliament to deal with the Office in the interval, when it is to be hoped that the Lord Chancellor's plan will be brought forward with better success.

plaint. The concise forms in which the decrees will be hereafter prepared, ensure expedition, and the reduced scale of fees will allow them to be given at a very moderate cost. The saving to the public will amount to no less than 17,050*l* per annum.*

The Masters' Office was in a still worse condition than the Registrars. The cost and delay of the proceedings there were intolerable, owing to a rule, that no document could be read before the Master, until it had been copied in his office; the charge for such copy being paid to the Master. The parties in vain protested against taking copies of what was of no use to them, or any one else;† the rule was inflexible, and, in case of poor suitors, very often operated as a total denial of justice. No wonder that the word copy-money is so odious to the suitors of the Court. Nothing, perhaps, could be more objectionable, except the other great abuse termed "gratuities," which formed a great source of the income of the Master's Clerk. This was a consideration paid him by the parties for expedition, so that the rich man had thus the means of securing for himself the precedence. One of the Masters, to his honour be it spoken, shocked at a striking instance of venality which occurred in his own office, abolished these gratuities without waiting for a compulsory clause in an Act of Parliament. Both copy-money and gratuities are now abolished; and the Masters and their Clerks are paid by salaries, which will reduce the expense of the office from 52,000*l*. to 35,000*l*. being a saving to the public of 17,000*l*. per annum.

	Present Income.	Future.	Saving.
10 Masters, averaging 3,900 <i>l</i> . a year each - - -	£39,000	25,000	14,000
10 Chief Clerks, averaging 1,300 <i>l</i> . per annum each -	13,000	10,000	3,000

But the savings to the suitors will be the whole 39,000*l*., inasmuch as the whole of their future salaries are to come from the Suitor's Fund, which is in a state to admit of this contribution, without any injury to the public.

The reduction of four of the Six Clerks will make a saving of 4,800*l*. per annum, and the two Examiners of the Court of Chancery are reduced to 700*l*. per ann. each, which makes an additional saving of 1000*l*. per annum.

Another stain upon the Court of Chancery has been the number of offices to which light duties and large emoluments were attached, to the cost of the suitor, out of whose purse

	Present Income.	Future.	Saving.
* Master of the Report Office - - - -	£4,300	1,000	3,300
Registrars and their Clerks - - - -	27,800	14,050	13,750

† In some instances, by agreement between the Solicitor and the Master's Clerk, the copies were not made, though the charge for them was.

these emoluments are paid. These and other offices, in the gift of the Lord Chancellor, being all executed by deputy, were usually filled by the members of his family, or his immediate dependants. The fruits of one of them, yielding 7,500*l.* per annum, are now enjoyed by a clergyman who had the good fortune to be nephew to a deceased Chancellor, and another of them was for many years held by the three daughters of Lord Chancellor Northington. The total amount received by these officers was 24,472*l.* per annum. Although this grievance has existed time out of mind, the present Lord Chancellor is the only one who has had the courage to apply the remedy, and the disinterestedness to make the sacrifice. By the Lord Chancellor's Act, introduced by the Solicitor-General, the salaries of these offices are made proportionate to the duties to be performed, and they will henceforth cost the public no more than 2,800*l.* per annum, being a saving of 21,670*l.** It should be remarked also that two of these offices, producing together the net income of 2,600*l.*, became vacant before the passing of the Act; and as it was necessary at once to appoint some person to discharge their duties, the Lord Chancellor temporarily appointed his brother; but by the regulations of the Act passed about the time of the appointment, and of this Act, that appointment is at once cancelled, and the saving to the public accrues immediately; all the other holders of

* Savings in Offices in the gift of the Lord Chancellor, as now regulated ;

	Present gross In- come of Principal	Do. of Deputy and expenses.	Future Income and expenses.	Saving.
Clerk of the Hanaper	£3350	550	200	3150
Clerk of the Crown	2100	1000	income 400 expenses 400	1300
Clerk of the Patents	1205	395	income 250 expenses 150	805
Registrar of the Affidavits	2800	1000	income 500 clerk 150 expenses 350	1800
Clerk of the Custodies	1722	375	expenses 200 no income	1522
Clerk of the Presentations	143	100	no income expenses 50	93
Clerk of the Dispensations	316		no income expenses 50	266
Patentee of Subpœna	1244	682		1034
Chaff Wax	1300	400	no income expenses 50	1650
Sealer	1000	200	no income expenses 50	950
Prothonotary	100	abolished		1000
Clerk of Enrolments in Bankruptcy	2	This Office was revived under a Bill brought in by Mr. Freshfield.		
Patentee in Bankruptcy	9500	1500		9000
	£24,680	6,202	2,800	21,670

these offices, insisting on the benefit of their vested rights, the public are debarred from the advantages of the arrangement as to them during their lives.

Thus the suitors in Chancery will be relieved by a reduction of cost to the amount of 68,470*l.* per annum; and it must not be forgotten, that this is in addition to the reduction of 28,000*l.* effected in the cost of proceedings in Bankruptcy, by the Bill introduced by the Lord Chancellor in 1831.

Another subject of complaint against the Court of Chancery has been removed, by a Bill to amend the practice in cases of Lunacy.*—Commissions of Lunacy may henceforward be directed to the persons best qualified to execute them, and all the unfortunate individuals against whom Commissions are in force are secured from improper treatment, by the constant superintendence of a Board appointed for that purpose, the expenses of which will be defrayed by a trifling per centage on the *clear* annual incomes of the Lunatics, the more wealthy portion of whom will thus be made to assist their companions in misfortune, in procuring a benefit common to them all.

The last of the Lord Chancellor's legal Reforms this Session was a Bill for the separation of the judicial from the political functions of the Great Seal, for the appointment of a Chief Judge, and the establishment of a Court of Appeal in Chancery. The salary of the Lord Chancellor was proposed to be reduced from 14,000*l.* to 8,000*l.* a year. The great pressure of business caused the Bill to be postponed to next year.

The substitution of an efficient Court, composed at least of four Judges, for the old mode of hearing Appeals at the Privy Council, is another of the important changes effected this Session.

It must be admitted that a single Judge, hearing and deciding on questions of great moment, was not a very good specimen of a Court of Appeal; particularly when it is considered that the questions brought before the Privy Council are generally questions involving some of the most abstruse points of foreign law questions, in which the interests of millions of people (as in the case of India) are involved. The repeated complaints of our colonists who suffered under the infliction of this mode of trying appeals, to say nothing of the uncertainty and delay, it must be admitted, were any thing but ill-founded.

By the present arrangement, first the expensive anomaly of the appeal to the delegates (requiring in each case a separate commission,) has been removed: and an efficient Court constituted; powers have been given for the examination of evidence, and enforcing the determinations, as finally pronounced by the

* An Act to diminish the inconvenience and expense of Commissions in the nature of writs de lunatico inquirendo, and to provide for the better care and treatment of Lunatics and persons of unsound mind, found such by Inquisition.—3 and 4 William IV. c. 36.

King in Council, on the recommendation of the Court. Some technical difficulties had for a quarter of a century prevented the hearing of from fifty to one hundred Appeals from the Native Courts of India, involving property in dispute to the amount of nearly a million of money, and entailing, by this delay and suspense, an incalculable mass of misery and injustice. These, the present law has removed; and the Natives of India will no longer suppose that the power of Appeal has been bestowed on them in mere mockery?

But there is another, and a far more important question connected with this subject: namely, the promise which this Reform holds out, that, ere long, the constitution of the highest Court of Appeal will receive that consideration, and undergo that improvement which its present constitution so urgently demands. It is but reasonable to suppose that the same views, and the same spirit which induced the present Ministry to propose and perfect this amendment, will not be backward in giving efficiency and perfection to the Court which is the highest known to the constitution, and that this Reform of the Appellate Jurisdiction of the Privy Council will lead to the establishment of a well organized and efficient Court of Appeal, instead of that now existing; which is, in fact, in nine cases out of ten, an appeal to a single Judge, (and not seldom from his own decisions,) assisted only by a Bishop and a lay Lord, attending under penalty, and according to a rota.

The severity of our criminal code has been mitigated by an Act abolishing the punishment of death upon persons entering and stealing in a dwelling-house.* Heretofore the simple fact of entering a dwelling-house, either by day or night, and steal "any article of any value whatever," subjected the offender to the highest penalty of the law. Transportation and imprisonment are substituted for this sanguinary provision.

The Acts for the amendment of the Laws of Real Property will form a memorable epoch in our civil history. That which is the most general and practical, the Limitations of Actions Bill, may be designated as a salutary and long demanded law for the quieting men in the possession of their estates. No single change in the law so sweeping or so important has been made within the last century. It is one of the soundest and the most vital principles of the law of property, that he who has a right shall pursue it within a reasonable time, or be at once shut out. As the law stood in some cases, claims might be made at almost an indefinite period, when all chance of defence was gone, witnesses dead, &c. The length of time allowed for prosecuting suits gave rise to the rule that no one could be considered as having a good title to land unless he could show an undisputed possession of at least sixty years; nay, from particular circumstances, he was often compelled to trace it through the course of

*This Act was introduced by Mr. Lennard, M. P. for Malden, with the support of Government.

a whole century or more. Hence the expense and difficulty relating to the sale of lands. By the new law, the time for claim is reduced to twenty years, with a saving of ten years more in cases of disability. All the old uncertain and fantastic remedies are at once swept away; and with it the profits and pickings of lawyers; the remedy for the recovery of property reduced to one uniform and simple standard, and the Statute Books and the Digests are at once relieved of a mass of rubbish. One of the advantages next in importance to thus shutting out stale claims, is, that henceforth, the rule which makes a sixty years' title necessary, must be materially abridged by the Courts, say at least one half, and thus one half of the expense of tracing titles will be removed.

The Act for abolishing Fines and Recoveries is another important change. Till now, in the nineteenth century! (laymen will scarcely believe it,) whoever wished to bar an entail, must suffer a recovery, as it is termed; that is, must actually have a suit commenced before he could acquire any power of dealing with that property which in effect was his own. The whole matter, as regarded the forms and the fees, was proceeded in pure earnestness. The rest was a fiction, and put money in the pockets of the attorneys. This sarrago of rubbish, inflicted grievous and twofold evil. First, the expense, next, the risk which attended this ticklish proceeding; but expense was nothing to the risk. For though the suit was fictitious, yet the Court was so far in earnest, that a single slip, an accidental misapplication of some principle of law, (and the laws relating to these proceedings were amongst the most difficult and recondite relating to property,) the leaving out a word, perhaps, vitiated the whole proceeding.

It was no uncommon thing to see a person who had purchased an estate turned out of the possession by a claimant, under an old entail, on the ground of some technical error in the recovery. The levying a fine was a proceeding somewhat similar, and accompanied by the same absurd formalities, with the like expense, and often with the like result. The new law has at last annihilated these anomalies. Volumes upon volumes have been written on the operation and effects of Fines and Recoveries, and on the various acts for the limitations of actions which, by these two Statutes just past, are converted into harmless lumber, only to be looked into in future times by the antiquarian. Can it be believed, that Lord Eldon, groaning over the change, weeping at the loss of those forms and subtleties, in which he had delighted for more than half a century, tried to sound the alarm, and cried out, that of they passed, if fines and recoveries were made a dead letter, every country gentleman ought to hire a young barrister, and take him with him into the country as a sort of a legal garde champêtre?

There are two other measures connected with real property, for the amendment of the law of Inheritance and the laws relating to Dower, removing several anomalies and inconveniencies. Amongst the rest, the absurd dogma of the laws of Inheritance

which prevented a father or mother from inheriting the lands of a child. As the law stood, the estate of the child went to the remotest collateral relation, nay, even escheated to the King for want of heirs, rather than ascend to a parent. This absurdity, and some others, such as that law which prevented a brother or sister of the half blood from inheriting, have been removed. One, however, important measure suggested by the Commissioners, the bill for establishing a General Registry, and which was brought forward after very considerable care and preparation has been rejected by the House of Commons. Though this is to be regretted, yet it is impossible but that when that general attention has been given to the subject, and its vital importance, as regards the title and possession of all landed property ascertained, the hasty decision of the last session will be recalled.

It is not the House of Commons alone which has rejected an important law improvement. The House of Lords threw out the Local Courts Bill, a rejection far more to be regretted than the loss of the Registry Bill. With care and good council a man had a fair chance of maintaining a title to his property, but according to the existing state of the law, as it regards debts and suits, not involving property to a large amount, the very existence of justice is practically denied. On what evidence was the Local Courts Bill founded? Why, on the testimony of whole classes of those most interested in the change of the law; of those who had suffered grievously from it in pocket. Did not witness after witness state to the Common law Commissioners that the remedy, as it now stands, is worse than the evil? Did not whole firms say we never sue for small debts? Is it not proverbial that an attempt to recover a debt for a small amount is little else than throwing good money after bad? Does any man, without a long purse, attempt to seek redress for injury? Are not people constantly ruined by a successful law suit? How was this measure introduced? Was it a hasty, crude, theoretical scheme, seeking change for the sake of change, making judges and places merely for patronage? or was it one that the public have been, with one record, calling for as a right? one that has been recommended and supported by all parties at various times, when the subject was discussed?—The bringing justice to every man's door,—a following up, or rather restoring, the judicial constitution of the country. The measure came recommended by the united voices of the Common Law Commissioners, all practising lawyers of eminence. Neither was there any fear of bias on the score of politics, for, with one exception, every one of those was known, more or less, to be opposed to the views of the present Government. Is it likely that, with what may be considered the prejudices of such men against a change, they should have been induced hastily, and without reference to consequences, to recommend so important a measure, without cautiously balancing the evil against the good?

What in reality were the principal arguments against the measure? that cheap justice was a nuisance, and that the Judges (not having 5000*l.* a year.) and who lived in the country, would become at once bad lawyers and corrupt judges? This is not the

place to discuss such points; to balance between that justice which is cheap and attainable, and that which from its price is practically beyond reach of the many; or to consider the pay necessary to make a judge capable of deciding on a 20*l.* debt, a petty action of slander, or of assault and battery. Coupled with the Local Courts Bill, is the measure for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt,—another great stride in Reform—one long called for by every philosopher and statesman who has considered the subject. A Bill for this purpose was introduced by the Solicitor General, but owing to the necessity of making changes in its provisions, in consequence of the rejection of the Local Courts Bill, it was withdrawn, not however without full promise of its being renewed in the next session.

Before quitting the head of Legal Reform, the Bill brought in for the Consolidation of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions must be noticed, though it has not been carried through. The measure has been prepared, and this, like those reforms before noticed, is made in consequence of the recommendations of a commission which was issued for consideration of the best mode of removing many of the anomalies, and many of the cumbrous processes which exist in the numerous Ecclesiastical Courts spread over this country. By the recommendation of the Commissioners, the whole testamentary jurisdiction of the different Ecclesiastical Courts, (some hundreds in number,) will be abolished, and to the long and inconvenient proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts reformed. Power is given to the judges to try the causes, as other causes are tried to hear evidence *viva voce*. The absurd and obsolete powers of punishing in the Ecclesiastical Courts for brawling, defamation, incest, adultery, fornication, &c. are to be swept away. These changes, with many other important provisions relating to the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Courts, and the discipline of the Church, will, when completed, form part of an important and widely extended Reform.

All these improvements, great as they unquestionably are, will probably be far surpassed by the good that we may expect from the Commission to arrange the Statutes relating to the Criminal Law. Independent of the usefulness of the immediate object of the Commission, the measure is most important as the first approach that has been made by any Government in this country towards a National Code. Our Statutes have gone on from year to year progressively increasing, till, from one volume, they have spread into fifty, whilst their inconsistency, verbosity, and tautology, have become no less alarming than their bulk. Their necessary companions and interpreters, the Reports of the Decisions in the Courts of Justice, actually reach three hundred volumes, being about ten times the number known to Lord Coke. Thus, between the lawgiver and his interpreter, our laws may soon be such “as no fortune can purchase, and no capacity can digest;” and it is only by adopting the course which rescued the Roman Jurisprudence out of this unhappy condition, that we can hope to avert our impending danger.

We have entered at some length into a detail of the Law Reforms, seeing their great practical importance to the well-being

of the country, and how much these improvements tend to restore the tone of content to men's minds, and as affording a convincing proof of the labors of the Session, more especially when the particular difficulties of effecting these Reforms are considered. Difficulties which, arising first from the complexity of the subject, the variety of aspects under which every point must be considered, the mass of detail to be attended to; and lastly, the interested and endless hostility arising from Attorneys, Barristers, Clerks, and holders of offices, with large fees and small duties. Are seventy Commissioners of Bankrupts to be swept away; seventy, nay, seventy times seventy enemies are at once raised up, those who have been quietly living in the enjoyment of the fees in decent obscurity, come forth open-mouthed ready for the fight—fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, friends; nay, the very expectants of these places, the loss of the mere potentiality of the possession of which at a future period is considered a robbery, all, in one loud cry, denounce the injustice and impugn the system which brings Reform in this department. Professional men, wedded to forms and ancient practices, seek to alarm the public by mysterious warnings of the approaching dissolution of all the bonds which hold property together; compensation for overgrown salaries, down to the smallest contingent fee, is clamoured for, or humbly begged. And before the reform can be effected, the assertions and the arguments of the one class are to be contradicted and refuted, the claims of the other are to be estimated with care, and reasonably satisfied, in addition to all the labors and knowledge requisite to render the measure entirely perfect and complete. Those only, we suspect, who have traced the progress of such a measure of Reform as we have alluded to, through all its mazes, can be really aware of the difficulty with which such a measure is achieved, or the patience and temper which are required for its accomplishment.

CORPORATIONS.

Amongst the most important of the Commissions appointed by the Government is that for inquiry into Corporations—a measure, of perhaps the most importance of any which was originated during this session; one, and only inferior in value to the Reform Act itself. It is the grand assault on the last hold of Tory corruption, and abused patronage. No evil called more loudly for reform—no abuse weighed more heavily on the general mass of the inhabitants of Corporate Towns, than the administration of the Corporate Property, and the undue exercise of powers, originally designed for the benefit of the people.

If the representation of the country required reform, if that had become corrupt from age, misuse, and change of the times, surely all must admit that every argument which was used in furtherance of a Reform in Parliament, may, with at least equal justice and like force, be urged for a complete revision and reform of Corporations.

The Commission which has been appointed, and the names of those to whom it is directed, will ensure searching and complete

inquiry. And it is only by such previous inquiry, by an accurate and detailed statement of the circumstances which relate to each town, and to the mode in which the powers confided has been exercised, that real and substantial justice can be done, or the means of sound legislation obtained.

It may be fairly assumed, that where malversation has existed, where privileges exist, inconsistent with the good government of people, neither the one nor the other will be allowed to remain.

A guide, indeed, to the views of the ministers, on this subject, may in some respects be found in the bill brought into the House of Lords this Session, though not as yet proceeded with : this makes provision for the incorporation of the new boroughs; the voters for the borough are to become burgesses of the corporation. The burgesses of each ward are to elect the common-councilmen, who are to elect the mayor and aldermen, town-clerk, and other officers.

One main feature of this measure is, that no property can be acquired by the corporation; and hence their poverty will be the best guarantee for their honesty. And as there will be no patronage, there can be no jobbing.

The mayor and aldermen are to be the magistrates for the town, and by their frequent meeting in petty sessions to ensure speedy justice : and they, with a given number of the common-council, are to form a committee, for the sole purpose of regulating an efficient police, which, in fact, may be considered the most important object of their incorporation.

SCOTLAND.

Connected with Corporation Reform, is the material change which has been made, this Session, by which the whole system of self-election in the Scotch burghs has been entirely abolished.

This flagrant abuse, which was introduced nearly four centuries ago, under pretence of avoiding the tumults incidental to popular election, had long ago produced its natural fruits, in the utter dilapidation of the revenues of most of their communities, in an almost unbroken series of corruption and embezzlement, and at last, in the general discontent and indignation of all who were exposed to its influence.

It was in vain, that the attention of Parliament, and Parliamentary Committees, had been called to the system; the power of corruption was too great to admit of its being destroyed, till the voice of the people prevailed in a Reformed House of Commons.

A liberal constitution, in most respects similar to that conferred by the English Corporation Bill, has been given to these boroughs, and in like manner Scotch Commissioners have been appointed to search into, and apply a complete remedy to past municipal abuses.

In addition to this important measure, a Commission has issued for a general inquiry into the state of the laws, and courts of justice, with the view of introducing an extensive reform in both; and, from what passed in Parliament, it appears, that measures

for preventing the mal-administration of Church patronage are under the consideration of the Government.

In the last session, an Act passed, by which the judicial duties of the Court of Exchequer were so regulated, as eventually to be executed at a charge of only £600 a year, instead of £8000 per annum, which latter sum, be it observed, was a reduction from £70,000 per annum, the original cost.

The most considerable duties of the Barons of the Treasury, were, as Lords of the Treasury of Scotland, acting under the direction of the Treasury in London. Much abuse, and no advantage was derived from this : and this Session an Act was passed, transferring to the Board of Taxes in London the whole duties of the Barons in respect to the revenue of taxes. This measure, and one in progress for the consolidating the collection of the revenue of Stamps and Taxes, will effect a considerable saving.

Hitherto, the revenue of Scotland, amounting to about five millions, has been brought to a general fund of collection in Edinburgh, and transmitted thence, at a rate of exchange disadvantageous to the public. An arrangement is nearly completed, by which the remittances will be effected directly from the points of collection, and on terms more advantageous. Besides this saving, the arrangement will put an end to the office of Receiver General and Paymaster.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT.

The last of the domestic questions which we proposed to consider, is Poor Law Amendment; and, as it is the subject in which the least apparent progress has been made, it may be advisable to state, at some length, not only what *has* been done, but also the obstacles which have prevented more from being effected. The mode in which that subject was dealt with, during the forty-five years for which Mr. Pitt and his followers held office, is a most instructive example of the wisdom, public spirit, diligence, and courage of that party. When in the year 1795, the question, long after it had engaged the attention of all thinking individuals, at last was taken up by public men, the popular party, the party on whose side most sympathy was enlisted, was that of the receivers of relief. Mr. Pitt, therefore, after a speech, in which he expressly proposed to apply every possible stimulus to population, and was ready, if he followed out his own principles, to remove, as far as he could, all inducement to industry, or providence, brought in a bill quite worthy of such a preface; a bill to legalise Parish allowance in aid of wages, to those who had families, or were unable, or unwilling, to earn their whole subsistence by labor; to enable persons possessed of property to claim public charity, and even to demand a cow, or in the words of the bill, "any other domestic animal," to be supplied at the expense of the public. This bill, indeed, failed; but the act which Mr. Pitt actually introduced, the 36 Geo. III. cap. 23; the act, which, for the avowed purpose of preventing Parish relief from being administered in a mode "injurious to the comfort, domestic situation, and happiness" of paupers, gave to the Magistrates

their present, and, indeed, more than their present discretionary power over the parochial funds, was, perhaps, more mischievous than the bill which was rejected. Under the sanction of that Act, the monstrous system under which we are now suffering; the system which proclaims, that indigence, whatever be its cause, whatever be the idleness, or improvidence or profligacy of the applicant, gives a right to *comfortable* subsistence out of the property of others, was fostered and extended, until it forced itself on the attention even of a Tory Administration. Committees of the Lords and of the Commons were appointed in 1817, and reported, that, "unless some efficacious check were interposed, there was every reason to expect the neglect and ruin of the land, and the waste and removal of other property, to the utter subversion of the happy order of society so long upheld in these kingdoms."

The check which the legislature interposed to meet these evils was characteristic. The 59 George III. cap 12, was passed. An Act, consisting of thirty-seven salutary provisions, almost every one of which is carefully and effectually neutralized by an exception or a qualification. The enacting clauses are without doubt to be attributed to the eminent persons whose name the act usually bears. The exceptions and qualifications were the wisdom of the Lords and of the unreformed Commons. Who can wonder that such act did not interpose the efficacious check demanded by the report, or that the evil thus tenderly handled by the Legislature, pursued its appointed course?

The public, however, are not to blame for this. Writer after writer proclaimed the approaching ruin. Committee after committee examined evidence, and reported the necessity of amendment. Bill after bill was introduced, read a first time and dropped. All parties felt their danger; all, except the Government, endeavoured to avert it; but the task was difficult, unpopular, and dangerous. The Government was wise in its generation; and so the matter rested, till in the autumn of 1830, the mine exploded. It was at this calamitous period, when, in half the counties of England, the agricultural population were in arms, when barns and corn-ricks and thrashing machines were blazing, the clergy flying their homes, the magistrates capitulating with the rioters, and the farmers secretly, or even openly urging them on; it was in the midst of this storm that the Tories abandoned the helm; and having run the vessel among the breakers, called on the Whigs to tack and preserve her.

Among the innumerable subjects of Reform, which forty years of indecision and procrastination had accumulated, it was unhappily some time before Poor Law Reform could be attended to. An emigration bill, as a means of facilitating such reform, was among the first measures of the new Government. It was abandoned, however, from a fear that as an insulated measure, it might be worse than useless; and the more urgent business of Parliamentary Reform, by absorbing the attention of the public, and in a great measure that of the Government, made it impossible during its pendency, to consider the whole question of Poor Law

Improvement; but the instant the Reform Bill had passed, that question was taken up. It was then supposed by many persons, perhaps by almost all, that the facts of the case were generally understood, and that a Government measure might be founded on the existing evidence. The Administration however, thought otherwise; they distrusted the ex-parte evidence obtained by Committees, from an examination of not more than 40 or 50 witnesses, all of whom came full of their own views, and anxious to supply testimony in their favor. They believed that the inquiry must be local, that witnesses must not be summoned, but sought for; that the pauper, the overseer, and the farmer, must be seen *in situ*; that work houses must be visited; vestry meetings and petty sessions attended, and the story of the independent laborer, the small proprietor, and the overseer, heard and considered, as well as that of the great farmer and the country magistrate; and that instead of a Chairman and four or five persons listening two or three hours a day for two or three weeks to voluntary witnesses, twenty or thirty persons ought to be employed for months in inspecting the actual workings of the system. But as the body of persons who were to make that inspection must be too numerous to be able to prescribe any one mode of proceeding, or to agree in any report, it was determined to appoint a Central Commission, whose business it should be to direct the mode of inquiry, to appoint the itinerant commissioners who were to make the actual inspection of the country, and after having received their separate reports to frame one final report, summing up the evidence, and proposing the measures which it should show to be desirable and practicable.

The central Commissioners were accordingly appointed in the beginning of the year 1832.

Scarcely any of them could be considered adherents of the present Government. Of the three principal Commissioners, the Bishops of London and Chester, and Mr. Sturges Bourne, the two former had been raised to the bench by previous administrations, and the third might be considered a political adversary.

It was hoped that a Report might be obtained which would enable Parliament to take up the question in that, or at least the succeeding session.

The first proceeding of the commissioners was to circulate printed questions on those points which appeared to them most material, either from their actual importance, or from their being subjects on which little information was in print.

While the replies to these questions were coming in, several of the Commissioners visited different parts of the country, in order to ascertain the mode of inquiry to be pointed out to their itinerant or as they have been usually called, Assistant Commissioners. The experience derived from these journeys, the practical knowledge possessed by some of the Commissioners, or the information derived from the answers to about two or three hundred sets of printed questions, enabled the Commissioners to frame instructions for their assistant Commissioners. When these had been framed, a business which necessarily took much time, the assistant Commissioners were appointed. To appoint them previous-

ly would have been useless, as no person could be expected to take an important and responsible office without the means of knowing what was expected from him. The choice was by no means easy; much knowledge, activity, good sense, and diligence were required, joined to the power of composition and arrangement; and though the mere expenses of the assistant Commissioners were paid, they received no remuneration for their time and labor. Several candidates for assistant Commissionerships declined the office when informed of the terms; others withdrew their applications after they had considered the instructions; some after having accepted it, were prevented by illness or other unforeseen causes, and some attempted and gave it up.

At length however, a number of assistant Commissioners were obtained, and set in motion, sufficient, not to give a full account of the poor Law Administration of the whole of England, or even of a considerable portion of it: but to give such a sample of its administration as might enable the public to infer from thence its general state. The assistant Commissioners were directed to make their reports before the end of November, 1832. If the central Commissioners hoped that this direction would be complied with, they either under-rated the difficulty of the inquiry or over-rated the diligence of their assistants. It is believed that no reports were delivered before the end of the year 1832, and that many were not received until the January following. As they were received, they were sent to the House of Commons' printers to be printed, in anticipation of the order of the House.

In the mean time, returns to the printed questions were received to an extent far beyond what could have been anticipated. It is understood, that nearly 2000 parishes, in fact about one-seventh of England, have sent returns. These as they were received, were digested, and their substance was, in like manner, sent to the Parliamentary printers.

A third branch of the evidence collected by the central Commissioners, consists of communications voluntarily made to them by different individuals; many of them of considerable length and importance; particularly those on the subject of Labor Rates and Education, a portion of which has been already printed and distributed by order of Parliament.

The difficulty of getting printed this enormous mass of evidence and the impossibility of making full use of it, while in manuscript, for the purposes of the final report, is understood to be the sole cause which prevented the central Commissioners from presenting a report before the termination of the session.

In the mean time some benefit has been derived from the labors of the Commission, not only by the publication of the paper on labor rates, to which we have already adverted, but by the appearance of some extracts from their evidence. These extracts were published in compliance with a requisition from the home office, and are believed to contain, not a selection of striking passages, and extraordinary statements, but a mere fair average of the contents of the reports from the assistant Commissioners. Such as they are, they fully shew the wisdom of Government in not resting satisfi-

ed with the existing information on the subject of poor Law Administration. If we compare the number, the variety, and the importance of the facts, and of the inferences contained in that small volume, with all the folios that have proceeded from Parliament on the same subject, how far do the powers of individual research appear to exceed those of a Parliamentary Committee?

There is every reason to expect, that before the commencement of the next session, the Commissioners, having taken such ample time for deliberation, will be able to propose, not perhaps the best conceivable measure, but the best that in the present state of political knowledge, public opinion will sanction, or a prudent Ministry introduce. A measure which, if it do not attempt at once to destroy the abuses that have been the growth of half a century, will immediately check their increase, and ensure their gradual extirpation. And it may be added, that the possibility of such a result, a result on which the future welfare of England depends, appears to be due solely to the present administration. Their predecessors seem never to have contemplated such an undertaking, or to have had the least notion of the means by which it could be effected.

In the mean time there was passed silently, and without the suggestion or assistance, or even the commendation of those who talk so loudly of their exclusive concern for the welfare of "*the people*," who assume to be the sole guardians of the working classes—a measure which promises more substantial benefits to those classes than any which has succeeded the establishment of Friendly Societies and Savings Banks.

Persons acquainted with those institutions, are aware that, of the Friendly Societies, a large proportion are based on erroneous principles, involving their ultimate ruin, and that in the majority of them, the hard earnings of the contributors are exposed to partial or entire loss, from the rapacity or the ignorance of the managers. To avoid these disasters, a laboring man may have deposited in a Savings Bank the surplus earnings of his labor from childhood; but when in the decline of life he wishes to relax his toils, he may lose his deposit, from want either of knowledge or of means to invest it productively and securely. These calamities are dreadfully frequent, and not only throw an independent and noble minded laborer into the workhouse, to avoid which he has been abstinent through life, but produce more general mischief by the discouragement of provident habits. One such instance may crush the frugality of a whole village. From fourteen to sixteen millions of the earnings of the laboring classes are exposed to these casualties. Again, a seaman or a laborer in a distant service wishes to have his surplus wages sent home and applied to the payment of a weekly stipend to his aged father or mother; but there is no trusty person who will take care of the deposit, or trouble himself with the apportionment and payment of the instalments. In a thousand instances the laboring classes have not the opportunities of giving effect to family affections or friendly sympathies, possessed by those who have guardians and executors

at their command, and can claim the services of the highest officer of the state.

By the Ministerial measure of 3d William IV. c. 14, Government has taken upon itself the guardianship of these cases. By that Act, the Depositors in Savings Banks, and others, are enabled to purchase Government Annuities, for life or for years, and either immediate or deferred. Experience may enable the Government to extend the amount beyond its present limit of 20*l.* a year. Tables of Insurance have already been framed, and have been sanctioned by the Treasury. The whole of the money advanced is returnable in case the contracting party does not live to the age at which the annuity is to become payable, or is unable to continue the monthly or annual instalments. This measure will secure the beneficial application of a vast amount of savings most meritoriously accumulated, and in innumerable ways contribute to the comforts, and the advancement of the social condition of the great mass of the people.

FOREIGN POLICY.

In order to take a just view of our foreign relations, we must carry our eye back for a moment to the condition of things when the present Government first took the helm. Three important questions were then pending, in all of which Great Britain either had taken a prominent part, or had a paramount interest. The affairs of Greece, Belgium, and Portugal.

1. The Greek question, as far as England was concerned, began with the protocol of April, 1826, which was signed at Petersburg by the Duke of Wellington, and which was followed by the treaty of July, 1827, signed in London, by Lord Dudley. The object of these instruments was to separate Greece from Turkey, and to place the Greek nation, within a territory to be specially defined, in a state of independence and self-government.

When the present Administration succeeded to office, they found an agreement entered into by their predecessors, with the Porte, by which limits were to be imposed upon Greece, so narrow and so ill-chosen, that, while important districts of Greece would have been left to Turkey, the Greeks would have had no defensible frontier, and perpetual collision would have taken place between the Turkish and Greek population. Such a settlement could only have laid the foundation of future quarrels.

The present Government despatched Sir Stratford Canning to Constantinople, to endeavor to make a more rational arrangement. That able ambassador was completely successful; and he obtained the consent of the Porte to an amended boundary, as excellent, in every respect, as the former one had been defective.

Prince Otho of Bavaria, selected as King of Greece by the three mediating Powers, in virtue of an authority from the Greeks themselves, has since arrived in his dominions, where he was enthusiastically received; and Greece, reviving from the tomb, and awakening from the deathlike torpor of ages, takes her place among the Christian and civilized nations of Europe.

May we not hope that this country, once the peculiar seat of the arts, of science, and of civil liberty, will prove itself not unworthy of the fortunate condition to which it has now been raised.

2. The Belgian question, like the Greek, had its origin in events antecedent to the formation of the present Government. They found on this subject a course chalked out to them by their predecessors. They might modify it as they advanced, but could not, even if they had wished to do so, retrace steps already taken.

The revolution in Belgium broke out in August, 1830. The King of the Netherlands, in October, called upon his allies, and Great Britain among the rest, to send him troops to quell the revolt; the British Government, under the Duke of Wellington, refused to do so; the Dutch were almost entirely expelled from the Belgian provinces; and the King of the Netherlands, unable to put down the rebels by his own means, or to get succour from his allies, entreated that a Conference might be assembled, and that an armistice might be imposed on the two parties; himself and his revolted subjects.

His request was complied with; in the beginning of November the Conference met in London; and its first act was to declare to the two parties that they should fight no more, and that the line of demarcation between them, during an armistice, unlimited as to time, should be the line which, before the union in 1814, separated the old Dutch provinces from the provinces of Belgium. This decree at once established the principle of separation. For the Belgians had declared themselves independent, and the King of Holland was told the war must cease. He could not, therefore, recover his lost territory, except by the consent of the Belgians, and that consent it was evident he never could obtain.

The task then of the present Government was so to settle the terms on which separation should take place, as to provide for the interests and security of all parties concerned.

The arrangement is not yet completed, but it is supposed to be verging towards its close; and if Belgium finally becomes an independent, constitutional, commercial, and neutral state, it will contribute more to preserve the peace of Europe in such a condition of existence, than in any other which could have been assigned to it.

The difficulties which have been encountered, have arisen from the obstinacy of the King of the Netherlands, an obstinacy which during the last two years has burdened the Dutch with expenses, the permanent charges arising from which, will almost counterbalance the relief afforded them by the division of the debt between them and the Belgians.

The citidel of Antwerp was to be evacuated in fifteen days by the armistice which the King of the Netherlands himself had invoked in November, 1830; but the possession of that fortress enabled him to harass the Belgians, and to intercept their trade on the Scheldt. He therefore refused to give it up. England and France proposed to the other three Powers to declare, that Belgium should strike off from her debt to Holland a million of

florins for every week during which, after a certain time, the Dutch should continue to occupy any part of the Belgian Territory. The three Powers refused to agree to this proposal; England and France therefore were obliged to resort to force: hence the siege of Antwerp, and hence the Dutch embargo. These vigorous measures disconcerted all the calculations of the Dutch King and his partisans, whether English Tories, or Continental Absolutists. Baffled in their schemes, they vented their anger in predictions. The Citadel would never be taken; the Prussians would march to relieve it; the Russians would pour down from Poland; Austria would take the field; and the tide of a general war would sweep the French back to their own frontier. But Prussia only grumbled, and coquetted about Venloo; Austria never stirred; and Russia contented herself with some angry boasts of what she would have done, if she had been nearer to the scene of action. The prophets then foretold* that Chasse, sooner than surrender, would blow up himself and his garrison, and bury all under the ruins of the place. But old Chasse went on quietly smoking his pipe; retiring from one cellar to another, as the bombardment advanced; and, at length, when the breach was practicable, and he had got to his last casemate, he surrendered, as people in such situations generally do.

Then the embargo was said to be an utter failure; harmless to the Dutch, ruinous only to ourselves; it was unheard of to continue it so long; we ought to go to war, or else release the Dutch ships; the measure was illegal, and, at the same time ridiculous. These were the arguments and assertions by which the Tories tried to persuade Parliament to force the Government to take the embargo off. But Parliament turned a deaf ear to them; the embargo continued; and the consequence was, the Convention of the 21st of May. By that Convention the character of the Belgian question was entirely changed. The Dutch agreed to an unlimited armistice; and Europe was secured against any danger of a general war, resulting from the differences between Holland and Belgium. The question of peace or war was from that moment settled: what remained to be arranged, was a matter of florins, of tolls, and of duties; questions important, indeed, to the two parties, but not threatening the peace of the rest of Europe. This was the fruit of the siege of Antwerp and of the embargo; and thus has the result fully justified the wisdom of those measures.

3. The affairs of Portugal are drawing to a conclusion. The tyranny, which for five years has weighed down that wretched country, has been dashed to the ground. Miguel's fleet has been cap-

* The Tories appear on this as on other occasions, to have been influenced by their wishes rather than inspired by the spirit of prophecy. Mr. Alexander Baring, the chief of the prophets, was thus led to pay an involuntary compliment to the talent of our Foreign Minister, when he observed, "If the Noble Lord can get the army of Marshal Gerard out of Belgium, which I admit would be a great act—almost a master piece of diplomacy, &c.—*August 16, 1831.*

tured; the siege of Oporto has been raised; 2,500 brave Portuguese have marched in triumph from the Gardiana to the Tagus; Donna Maria has been proclaimed in Lisbon, and a British Minister has again presented himself at the Court of the Rightful Sovereign of Portugal. British valor has, as usual, been associated with Portuguese freedom, and Cape St. Vincent has again witnessed the exploits of naval heroism. The English Government has, with respect to these affairs, steadily adhered to the course which it had chalked out for itself. It has been rigidly neutral in the contest; but then it has required other Powers should be so to.

When Don Pedro's expedition sailed from Terceira, a Spanish army assembled on the confines of Portugal, under pretence of observation, but obviously ready to strike a blow in support of Don Miguel, if an opportunity should offer. But the events of 1826 had not been forgotten, and the experience of the conduct of Spain in that year was not thrown away.

The British Government did not trust solely to the assurances of the Cabinet of Madrid, but prepared itself for all events. A powerful squadron under Admiral Parker was sent to the Tagus, with orders, as was stated in Parliament, to take active part for Don Pedro, the moment a Spanish force should enter Portugal to assist Don Miguel. Spain and England have kept faith with each other; and though openly avowing their opposite wishes as to the result of the war, both stood aloof, leaving the contending parties ties to fight the matter out unaided. The part which England took in this struggle was, to keep the ring, and see fair play; and victory has remained with the cause of justice and of right. There can be no doubt that, if a Tory Government had been established in England, some pretence or other would have been found to let the Spanish army loose, and Portugal would have been still doomed to languish under the tyranny of Miguel.

The result of this conquest is most important, and will be extensively felt. The struggle was not simply between Pedro and Maria on one side, and Miguel on the other; Portugal was the arena on which the great European battle was to be fought by appointed champions. The Tories of England, the Carlists of France and Spain, the Holy Alliance, and the enemies of liberty all over Europe, were the backers of Miguel; the friends of justice and of rational government were the partisans of Maria; and if the cause of the Queen should continue victorious, the moral effect of her success will be felt throughout the whole of Europe.

While the attention of Europe was absorbed by events in the West, a sudden storm arose in the East, which threatened the destruction of the Turkish Empire. The throne of the Sultan was first menaced by his rebellious vassel, and then endangered by his protecting ally. The Porte has, for the present, escaped from both perils; the Egyptians have retired from Asia Minor, and the Russians have left Constantinople. It is the business of the British Government to take care that neither shall return again.

The war between Mahomet Ali and the Sultan was not an ordinary case of civil war between a Sovereign and his subjects, with which other States ought not to interfere. That contest

threatened so materially to affect the distribution of power in the East, that the Governments of Europe were entitled to look upon it as a matter in which their own interests were directly involved. Turkey may be a barbarous and uncivilized State; but if it were dismembered, what would become of its fragments? Would Europe gain, by substituting, at Constantinople, Russian civilization for Turkish barbarism? Would the benefit to humanity make up for the political evil? Could the crime of another partition be thus atoned for? Could we say

— Scelera ipsa nefasque
Hac mercede placent —?

Undoubtedly not. The Russian Empire is large enough for the purposes of good Government, and for the safety of the rest of Europe; and Constantinople must never be added to the dominions of the 'Tzar.

To name Russia, is to think of Poland; but, alas, what have we to say about that ill fated and devoted country! It lies prostrate at the feet of its conqueror, enduring all the miseries which exulting revenge can inflict upon a subdued, and no longer resisting antagonist. Are the statements which have been made on this matter exaggerated? for the honour of humanity we wish they may prove so; but if they are, why have they not been refuted? But, indeed, the published acts of the Russian Government speak for themselves. Have not those acts been calculated to crush national spirit and extinguish national feeling; to wound the hearts of individuals, and to add private affliction to public calamity? Could England have prevented all this? That is the question which belongs to our present inquiry. We fear we must answer in the negative; at least we believe that if England and France had attempted to throw their shield over Poland, the certain and immediate consequence would have been a general war in Europe, while Polish deliverance would have been a doubtful result.

The kingdom of Poland has no sea-port with which England can communicate; and it is separated from France by the interposition of half of Germany. Austria and Prussia were ready to have supported Russia, and each had an army of 100,000 men on the Polish frontier, ready to march at a moment's notice. If we had declared war against Russia, on behalf of Poland, we should have had to wage that war against Austria and Prussia also. But what would those three Powers have done? They would all have united to crush the Poles, which, as their armies were placed, would have been but the work of a fortnight; and then we should have had to wage a general war in Europe, not to save the Poles, but only to avenge their fall. The war, too, would necessarily have been a war of political principle, at a moment when the recent events in France and Belgium had excited, to the highest pitch, the passions of mankind, and had brought into active conflict the most extreme opinions. We believe our Government judged wisely. But the Polish nation sleeps, and is not dead. Some day or other it may still awake: we trust that the brighter day which must await it, will be prepared first by a milder and juster, and therefore wiser policy on the part of Russia, and will not be pre-

general tone of the administration, and on the temper in which ceded by a renewal of violence and bloodshed. But no administrative ingenuity can extinguish a great people, and no physical force can permanently keep such a people down in misery and bondage.

With respect to the affairs of Italy and Germany, the British Government appear not to have taken a prominent part; but the correspondence of Mr. Seymour, which was published some time since in the newspapers, shews what their course has been as to the former. The counsels given by the English Government, seem to have been such as it became the Government of a free country to give, and those counsels appear not to have been pressed further than was consistent with a respect for the independence of other States.

With France, our relations continue to afford a striking contrast to former periods of our history. Time was, when England and France fancied themselves natural enemies; when the foes of the one became of course the friends of the other. Those days are passed away; may they never return; long may two great and intelligent nations reap from the friendly intercourse of peace, advantages far beyond any which the most successful war could afford to either. The union of England and France has, during a period of unexampled difficulty, preserved the peace of Europe; and we may safely predict that while this union subsists, that peace will not be broken. A general war would now be a contest, in which England, France, and the people of every country in Europe would be ranged on one side; and the despotic Governments with their armies would stand on the other. The immediate issue could not be doubtful, the ulterior results might be tremendous. The English Government, we are convinced, will never court such a conflict; the arbitrary Governments of the Continent will be too wise to provoke it. England, then, never had a clearer course before her, and never held a more dignified, or more honourable station. She stands umpire between hostile and excited parties; she holds the balance between extreme and opposing principles; her task is "*Pacis imponere morem*;" and this task she may continue to perform no less to her own advantage, than for the benefit of the rest of the civilized world.

WE have now given a brief and imperfect outline of the principal transactions of the Session. We have shewn that in no Session within living memory, so much has been undertaken or so much accomplished. In politics as in war, fame depends on success, and it is by the future success of their measures, not by their good intentions, that the Ministry will be judged by posterity. The best exposition of their intentions is, perhaps, to be found in the speech to which we have already referred, delivered by Lord Grey on the second reading of the Irish Church Reform Bill.* We will add, however, a few remarks of our own on the

* "We had arrived at that situation in which one of two principles, of government must prevail. We must either have taken the bold, hazardous, and, I think, the fatal determination of depressing all spirit of Reform by severe coercive measures; or we must, conforming to the spirit and feeling of

they have carried on the government. They have been reproached for want of firmness and decision; for having been too ready to modify, or even abandoned their own views; in fact for having been too ready to be guided by public opinion. It certainly is conceivable that an administration might deserve such a reproach, but it must be admitted, to be rather an unusual one. The ordinary fault of Governors is just the reverse. Conceit, indifference to the advice of others, and presumptuous confidence in one's own knowledge and sagacity, are the usual concomitants of power. They have belonged to the weakest administrations; and are the besetting sins of a strong one. That the present is a strong administration, no one can doubt who looks at its overwhelming majorities: if it have been too humble in the exercise of its strength, if it have paid an undue degree of attention to the suggestions of friends or even of enemies, it has been guilty of an error which may be easily pardoned since experience shews that it is one not likely to be repeated. But we do not believe that any such error has been committed. We believe that such a reproach can be made only by those who do not understand the times in which they live, and who apply to the present constitution the traditions of one that has ceased to exist. When the House of Commons consisted of partisans, when every speech and vote was part of a system; when measures were introduced not because they were useful but because they were plausible, and opposed not because they were likely to do harm to the country, but lest they should do good to their proposers,—it might be the duty of a Government living in such an atmosphere of selfishness and insincerity, to form its plans in silence, and to carry them through with obstinacy, well knowing that what was good would be most likely to be attacked, and that whatever was proposed as an amendment was probably designed to be mischievous.

To get rid of this wretched system was the great object of the Reform Bill: and it *has* been got rid of. A majority of the Members of the H. of Commons are partisans not of the Ministry or of the Opposition, but of good Government. And ought their warnings to be disregarded? Ought the voice of those who speak in the name of the whole people to have no more weight than if they the times, endeavour to correct those abuses which affect the Constitution, and the various institutions of the country. The first is a line of policy which every government ought to repudiate, and we never could be parties to a system which must lead, in the first instance, to the establishment of another 'Holy Alliance,' for the purpose of extinguishing the spirit of liberty throughout Europe. It would be a vain and futile attempt;—ending in a war of opinion, and perhas, for a time, in the destruction of that liberty and independence for the maintenance of which this country has made so many sacrifices. The other alternative, therefore, only was left to us; and we have endeavoured to bring forward those measures of Reform which have been submitted to your Lordships, and to the other House of Parliament, strictly, I repeat, upon Conservative principles—wishing to cover the weak parts of the Government, and strengthen it against the attacks of its enemies, and to secure the confidence of its friends—to remove what even its friends deplore, and to oppose those wild and extravagant projects which, while they promise peace and freedom, must end in despotism or anarchy. This, my Lords, is the line of policy we have adopted: we have pursued a straight and steady course; and having only the permanent good of our country at heart, we have thrown ourselves with confidence on the generosity of our countrymen."

were a body of mere nominees? Or laying aside what ought to be done, can this be done? Who doubts that it cannot? Who doubts that the willingness with which the present administration has listened to suggestions, the earnestness with which it has sought, in every quarter, and by every means, for information, the frankness with which it has not only allowed but forwarded every inquiry,* must be imitated, and it cannot well be surpassed, by all who succeed them in their high office of presiding over the deliberations of a Reformed House of Commons?

The character which we have thought it our duty to give to the Reformed House, is certainly opposed to the anticipations of the enemies, and some of the friends of Parliamentary Reform. We will own, that, in some respects, it differs from our own anticipations. We expected, indeed, diligence from that House, and diligence it has bestowed, far exceeding that of any public assembly. It has sat, upon an average, nine hours each day during a Session of 142 days, making altogether 1,270 hours; whilst even the last Parliament, under the excitement of the Reform Question, did not sit, in what is termed their long Session, above 918 hours. The Committees exceed in number, in regularity of attendance, and, as may be perceived from the extract given in the annexed list,† in variety of subjects, those of any former Session.

We expected much from the members for the new constituencies in these Committees, but our hopes have been surpassed. They have shown an attention and impartiality, with an amount of knowledge and business-like talent, such as is not usually found even in those who have enjoyed the benefit of long Parliamentary experience. It must, however, be admitted, that the merits of the Reformed House, in these respects, are less generally known than they ought to be. Though almost all the real business of the House is done in Committees, the absence of reporters leaves the public in ignorance of the persons and the labor by which it has been effected. And though the debates on the Factory Bill, and on the other practical questions in which the new Members principally distinguished themselves, were reported, yet, in compliance with the general indifference of readers to *the details of*

* Witness the Committees granted, as soon as asked for, on the Metropolitan Police, Army and Navy appointments, Cold Bath Fields Meeting, Land Revenues, &c.

	<i>Days.</i>		<i>Days.</i>
† Municipal Corporations	- 28	Trade	- 36
Scottish Entails	- 6	Letters Patent	- 12
Royal Burghs in Scotland	- 18	Land Revenues	- 25
Fines and Recoveries	- 6	Stafford Borough	- 11
Sale of Beer	- 20	Admiralty Courts	- 11
Grand Juries in Ireland	- 10	Dramatic Performances	- 6
Metropolitan Police	- 27	Irish Spirits	- 11
Army and Navy Appointments	28	Cold Bath Fields Meeting	- 12
Agriculture	- 25	Chancery Offices Regulation	13

It must be observed that all this business was transacted after Easter, as up to that time the House was occupied by Election Committees,

such measure, their speeches were so briefly stated, as to give a most inadequate representation of their merits.

One of the threats of 1832 was, that a Reformed House would not consist of Gentlemen. Never was there a more unfortunate prophecy. If the exhibition of manly and generous feeling, if the determination to see fair play, the disapprobation of any unjust, or unprovoked attack, the abhorrence of shuffling, or disingenuous proceedings, the reliance on personal integrity, the marked attention shewn to those who preferred the general welfare of the country to the real or supposed interests of their constituents, and a contempt for those who ventured to profess themselves the mere mouth-pieces of the rapacity or prejudices of those who sent them,—if these are characteristics of Gentlemen, where shall we look for an assembly better deserving that title? Not, certainly, among the nominees of Peers, or the delegates from Corporations. The Members of the Reformed Parliament have sometimes displayed impatience, but it has been impatience of vanity or presumption. Some persons have incurred ridicule; but not those who in a homely manner, or a provincial dialect, tendered sincerely the results of their inquiries or experience. Some have even been refused a hearing; but only those from whom nothing would have been heard but declamation, for the purposes of display or agitation. The fault found, and perhaps not unjustly found, with the House, has been its toleration and indulgence, a fault the least likely to increase.

In the most important of all merits of a legislative body, sincere public spirit, the superiority of the present House is still a more striking. This again we expected; but our expectation was mixed with fear, that so large a body, no longer under the strict discipline of private interest and party feeling, might be wanting in that general confidence, in the Executive, which is essential to steady Government. We were apprehensive, that by rashly interfering with the proceedings of the administration, where all the grounds for those proceedings could not be shewn, as is the case, for instance, in matters of foreign policy, or where the subject is too vast to be mastered by any but those who have made a business of it, as is the case in many questions of finance, and commercial and manufacturing regulation, they might force the Ministry either on mischievous measures, or on resignation.

Apprehensions, far exceeding these, were felt, or pretended to be felt, by the opponents of the Reform Bill. Night after night we were told, that a Reformed House would acknowledge no leaders; or, at least, no leaders on the ministerial benches; that it would use the services of the present, or any future Ministers, but treating them only as its servants, and bearing with them only so far as they would implicitly follow the dictates of its fraud, or violence, or caprice. Has this been so? Is there any reproach which has been more profusely heaped on the present House, by its enemies, than that of subservience to Ministers? Has any former House shewn itself more conservative, not of the

abuses, but of the blessings, of the Constitution? And if there is any portion of the House which less deserves this praise, if there is any portion which has been more inclined than the rest to sacrifice the substantial interests of the Country to popular clamor, or popular sympathy, has this portion belonged to the independent, or to the Ministerial, or to the Tory part of the House? In spite of the opposition, sometimes separate, but more frequently combined, of Tories and Radicals, there never, so far as the House of Commons is concerned, has been a stronger Administration. It is true, that their strength has not been founded on the basis which formed the strength of their predecessors, so far as their predecessors were strong. It has not been derived from a body of mercenaries, blindly adherent while adherence seemed to their interest, and violently hostile as soon as hostility appeared profitable. The present Ministry are powerful; but it is the power of a Leader, not of a Master. It will last as long as they deserve it, and they ought to wish that it should last no longer.

APPENDIX.

POST OFFICE.

The following statement, compiled from official returns, will not be unacceptable to those who duly estimate the advantages of increasing the means of communication throughout the kingdom. It furnishes the best answer to the complaints which some individuals have made, of a want of energy in this department.

These improvements have been effected during the time the Duke of Richmond has been Postmaster General.

4 new cross Mail Coaches established in Great Britain.

22 of the English and Scotch Mail Coaches accelerated, including those from London to Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow, and Milford, and on the principal cross-road lines.

19 entirely new Horse Posts established.

11 old Communications improved.

14 places made Post Towns.

Letter Carriers appointed at 35 Towns; and the gratuities previously charged on the delivery of letters discontinued.

16 Letter Carriers added at large Towns to meet the increased demand for accommodation.

75 Penny Posts established, including, in an official arrangement, many hundred villages and hamlets, which had previously little or no means of communication by Post, and producing considerable additional revenue.

Miscellaneous improvements effected at 24 different Towns.

SCOTLAND.

10 new Post Communications opened.

14 old Communications improved.

Letter Carriers appointed at 25 Towns.

25 Penny Posts established upon the same principles, and with the same results, as in England.

Miscellaneous improvements effected at nine different towns.

IRELAND.

7 new Mail Coaches established.

12 of the Mail Coaches accelerated and improved.

32 new Post Communications opened.

42 old Communications much improved.

128 Penny Posts established.

The Deliveries and Receiving Houses in Dublin, placed on an improved footing.

6 new Twopenny Post Riders established.

36 additional Letter-Carriers appointed.

Additional Deliveries granted at upwards of 40 different villages in the neighborhood of the Metropolis.

An additional collection of letters daily established in seven districts.

The town delivery extended to a circle of three miles from the General Post Office; reducing the postage within that distance to 2*d.*, and affording many advantages to the correspondence.

The General Post Delivery extended to a circle of three miles from the Post Office, exempting a large portion of the correspondence from the twopenny postage, and accelerating the receipt of the letters in many cases.

A receiving house opened at the Eastern, and another at the Western extremity of the New Boundary, for the deposit of the General Post Letters, affording much more time for putting in letters.

2 additional "Accelerators" employed.

The Foreign Mails, delivered by the Inland Letter-Carriers, instead of waiting until 10 o'clock.

Foreign Mails arriving after the morning delivery, and before 4 o'clock, sent out by the twopenny post despatches, according to the hour of arrival, and on post nights, by the 7 o'clock evening despatches; the former practice being to retain any Mails arriving after 2 o'clock, for delivery next morning.

The mails to Lisbon, and the Mediterranean, forwarded by steam vessels, and bags made up for Cadiz, Zante, and Patras.

The mails to Holland and Hamburgh sent by steam vessels.

A daily post established to and from France.

N. B. The above account only shows the improvements for which the special authority of the Post-Master General has been obtained. There are other very numerous improvements connected with the acceleration of Mail Coaches, and the establishment or alteration of Horse Posts, which the surveyors are enabled to effect without increased expense, and which do not, therefore appear in the official records.



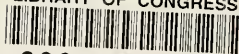


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